Introduction

Praise belongs to Allah, the Mighty, Giver of Gifts, King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the One Who sent the book down upon His slave, as a guidance and a reminder to those of understanding. Within it He placed the furthest limit of wisdom, decisive discourse, useful sciences, and conclusive proofs. He singled out for it the most astonishing of every astonishing wonder of exalted qualities, concealed subtleties, clear indications and divine secrets. He made it at the highest level of elucidation so that it is impossible for men and jinn [to imitate]. Scholars who are masters of language recognise the eloquence, skill, composition, syntax and abundant goodness it contains.

He made its memorisation in the breasts easy and guaranteed its protection from being exchanged or altered, so that it has not changed, and will not, during the entire length of time and the course of epochs. He made it a distinct speech and a just judgement, a clear sign and an enduring miracle, which was testified to by whoever witnessed the revelation as well as whoever was absent, and by it the argument on behalf of the penitent believer, and the proof against the doubting disbeliever will be established.

He guides people by the judgements He lays down in it, makes clear the halal and the haram and teaches the rites of Islam. He alternates the mention of prohibitions, commands, exhortations, restrictions, good news of reward and warning of punishment.

He makes the people of the Qur'an the people of Allah and His choicest friends. He singles them out from among His slaves, and makes them inherit the Garden and a beautiful place of return. So glory be to our Generous Master Who singled us out with His Book, and honoured us with His address. What an abundant blessing, and far-reaching proof. May Allah the Generous help us to undertake the duty of showing gratitude for it, fulfilling its right, and recognising its rank. My success is only by Allah, He is my Lord, there is no god but Him, upon Him I depend and to Him I turn in repentance.

The blessings of Allah, His peace, His greetings, His blessings, and His honouring be upon the one who guided us to Allah, conveyed to us the message of Allah, brought us the Vast Qur'an and the wise ayat, struggled for the sake of Allah truly, and taught, counselled and explained until the proof was established, the goal of the pilgrimage came in sight, the right direction was clearly distinct from deviance, the path of the truth and the correct became evident, and the darknesses of doubt

and uncertainty were dispelled. That was our lord and master Muhammad, the unlettered prophet, the Qurashi, the Hashimi, the one chosen from the quintessence of the best, the one singled out from the purest of lineages, and noblest of noble descents, whom Allah aided with evident miracles, overpowering troops, and sharp wrathful swords.

He united in him the nobility of this world and the next world, and made him a leader for those whose extremities are whitened [from *wudu'*] and whose faces are bright. He is the first who will intercede on the Day of Reckoning, and the first who will enter the Garden and knock on the door. May Allah bless him, his pure family, and his honoured companions, the best family and companions, with a pure abundant blessing whose measure cannot be taken by number or reckoning, and which neither the tongues of the eloquent nor the pens of writers will even approach describing.

The above is from the Introduction which Ibn Juzayy wrote to his own tafsir. He was born in 693 AH. His name was Abu ʿAbdullah Muhammad, called al-Qasim, ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Juzayy al-Kalbi (from the Arab tribe of Kalb), may Allah be pleased with him and make him contented, and make the Garden his shelter. He was al-Gharnati (from Granada in Andalusia, Spain) and thus European. Ibn Juzayy wrote widely on all the sciences of his day: hadith, fiqh, Qur'anic recitations and tafsir. He died as a shaheed in the Battle of Tareef in the year 741 AH, may Allah be pleased with him.

The Sciences of Tafsir

The knowledge of the tremendous Qur'an is the most exalted of sciences in rank, the most majestic of them in significance, the vastest of them in reward, and the noblest of them in remembrance. Allah blessed me by occupying me in service of the Qur'an, in learning and teaching it. He made me fall in love with its meanings and with acquiring its sciences. I discovered what commentary the ʿulama, may Allah be pleased with them, had compiled of compositions of different descriptions and distinct classes on the Qur'an.

There are those who prefer summarisation, and of them there are those who go to great lengths until they increase greatly the number of books. There are those who speak about one type of science rather than any other. Tthere are those who depend on transmitting the sayings of people. Tthere are those who depend on insight, verification and exactness. Each travels the path he does, and takes the way he is pleased with, and Allah promises each the best.

I desired to travel on their path, and to join the development of their group. So I composed this

book in commentary on the Tremendous Qur'an, and every science that is connected to it. I have adopted a useful course since I have made it both comprehensive and concise, by which I intend four things which contain four benefits.

The first benefit:

The gathering together of much science in a book of small volume in order to make things easier for students, and to bring things nearer for the eager. This book encompasses that which lengthy collections of knowledge contain, but after condensing and clarifying it and revising its sectional arrangements, and omitting its filler [material] and its excess. I have placed the desired quintessence of every one of the different sorts of science of Qur'an in it, without either excess or neglect, rather than the avoidable trivialities. Moreover I resolved on succinctness of expression, exaggerated concision, and avoidance of lengthiness and repetition.

Second benefit:

The mention of wonderful points and amazing benefits, which are rarely found in books, because they are one of my concerns (literally, "The daughters of my breast"), the springs of my remembrance (dhikr) and a part of that which I took from my shaykhs, may Allah be pleased with them, or from that which I received of rare elegances occurring in unusual manuscripts.

Third benefit:

The clarification of problems, either by resolving tightly locked, knotty problems, or by a good expression or the elimination of possible meanings and the explanation of general concepts.

Fourth benefit:

Verification of both the defective and sound sayings of the commentators, and distinguishing [the view] which is weightier from that which is of less consequence. That is because people's statements are in degrees: ● there is that which is sound upon which one can rely; ● the false to which one should not turn; ● and there is that which may be thought either sound or corrupt.

These possibilities [of soundness and falsehood] may be equal or different. The difference may be little or a lot. I have given these divisions different expressions by which you will know every degree and each statement. ● The least of them is that about which I make clear that it is either a mistake

or false. ● Then there is the one which I say is weak or remote. ● Then there is the one which I say that other than it is weightier than it, or stronger, or more obvious or more well known. ● Then there is the one which I give other than it precedence [in the order of mention] over it, making it known that the one preceded is weightier. ● Or [there is the one which] by saying about it "It is said that…" or "Some say about it…" [I am] intending to get out of responsibility for it. ● As for when I declare the name of the one who has made the statement, then I do that for one of two reasons: either to get out of responsibility for it, or else to seek his help [for what I believe is true] if the one who makes the statement is one on whom people model themselves. But I rarely attribute statements to people. That is because of the weakness of most ascriptions, or because of the differences of the transmitters in their ascription to them. As for if I mention a thing without ascribing it to anyone, that indicates that I myself follow it and am satisfied with it whether it is from me myself, or from that which I have chosen from the words of someone else. As for when a statement is completely mistaken or false, then I will not mention it in order to keep the book pure. Otherwise I may mention it in order to declare myself free of it.

This matter of the weighing [of views] and rectifying them is either based on scientific principles, or on that which the Arabic language requires, and we will mention after this a chapter on the necessities of weighing different statements, insha'Allah.

I have named it: كِتَابُ التَّسْهِيلِ لِعُلُومِ التَّنْزِيلِ, *The Book Which Eases the Sciences of Revelation.*

I have written two introductions at the beginning of it, one of them in useful chapters and comprehensive universal principles, and the other on vocabulary which is oft used.

I desire of Allah the Vast, the Generous, that He make the compilation of this book an accepted action, an effort which finds a response, and a means which will make me arrive to the gardens of bliss, and which rescues me from the punishment of hell, and there is no power to avert evil nor strength to do good except by Allah the Exalted, the Vast.

The First Introduction (in twelve chapters)

THE FIRST CHAPTER

On the revelation of the Qur'an to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him

peace, from the beginning when Allah commissioned him in Makkah when he was forty years old until he emigrated to Madinah. Then it was revealed to him in Madinah until Allah took him. The period during which it was revealed to him was twenty years. It has been said that it was twenty-three years, according to the disagreement on the age of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, whether he was sixty years old or sixty-three years old, upon the day he died[1].

Sometimes an entire surah would be revealed to him, and sometimes separate ayat, so that he, peace be upon him, would join some of them to others until the surah became complete. The first that was revealed to him of the Qur'an was the beginning of Surah al-ʿAlaq, then al-Muddaththir and al-Muzzammil. It has been said that the first to be revealed was al-Muddaththir, and it has been said the Fatihah of the Book. The former is the truth because of what has been narrated in the authentic hadith from ʿA'ishah in the very long hadith on the beginning of the revelation in which she said:

The angel came to him while he was in the cave of Hira, and said, "Recite!" He said, "I am not a reciter." He said, "Then he took me and squeezed me until it distressed me, and then he released me and said, 'Recite.' I said, 'I am not a reciter.' Then he took me and squeezed me a second time until it distressed me, and then he released me and said, 'Recite.' I said, 'I am not a reciter.' Then he took me and squeezed me a third time until it distressed me, and then he released me and said, 'Recite in the name of your Lord the One Who created. He created man from a blood clot. Recite and your Lord is the Most Generous the One Who taught man by the pen, taught man that which he did not know.'" The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, returned with his heart in turmoil, and said, "Wrap me up." So they wrapped him up until the fear he experienced left him[2].

In a version of Jabir ibn ʿAbdullah: "So the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'Wrap me up', and Allah, exalted is He, revealed, 'O you who are wrapped up…'"3.

---

[1] See *The History of Tabari* (Vol. 9) translation of *Tarikh ar-Rusul wa'l-Muluk* pp 206-8, translated by Ismail K. Poonawala, for the various narrations on when he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, died.

[2] Al-Bukhari, Chapter: How the Revelation to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Began, No. 3.

[3] Surah al-Muzzammil.

The last thing to be revealed was "When comes the help of Allah and the victory…"1 and it has also been said that it was the ayat of usury which are in Surah al-Baqarah[2], and it has been said that it was the ayah before it.

During the time of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, the Qur'an was divided up in scrolls and in the breasts of men. When the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, died, ᶜAli ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, sat in his house and gathered it (the Qur'an) according to the sequence in which it was revealed. If his pages were to be found, there would be great knowledge in them. However they are not to be found.

When a group of the companions were killed on the day of al-Yamamah fighting Musaylimah the Liar, ᶜUmar ibn al-Khattab counselled Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with them both, to gather together the Qur'an, from fear that it would disappear with the death of its reciters. So he gathered it together in pages without the surahs being arranged in sequence. These pages remained with Abu Bakr, then with ᶜUmar after him, and then with his daughter Hafsah, the Mother of the Believers.

During that period copies of the Qur'an, which had been written from [copies or portions belonging to] the Companions, spread to the horizons [of the Khilafah]. There were some differences between them. Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman advised ᶜUthman ibn al-ᶜAffan, may Allah be pleased with both of them, to unite people on a single copy of Qur'an from fear of their disagreeing. ᶜUthman commissioned and ordered Zayd ibn Thabit who then gathered it. He appointed three of Quraysh with him, ᶜAbdullah ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-ᶜAwwam, ᶜAbd ar-Rahman ibn al-Harith ibn Hisham and Saᶜid ibn al-ᶜAs ibn Umayyah. He said to them, "If you disagree about anything then put it in the dialect of Quraysh." They used the copy of the Qur'an that was with Hafsah as their model in this last collection. ᶜUthman, may Allah be pleased with him, supported them and participated with them in doing that. When the copy was completed ᶜUthman, may Allah be pleased with him, wrote copies and sent them to the capital cities[3]. He ordered that other [copies of the Qur'an] be torn up or

---

[1] Surah an-Nasr.

[2] Surah al-Baqarah ayat 275-8.

[3] According to Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti in his *Itqan fi Ulum al-Qur'an* copies of the Mushaf were sent to

burnt (it is narrated with خ i.e. تُخْرَقُ torn up or ح i.e. تُحْرَقُ burnt).

The arrangement of the surahs as they are today is the work of ᶜUthman, Zayd ibn Thabit and those with whom he recorded the copy of Qur'an. It has been said also that it was the doing of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, but that is weak and the traditions narrated about that refute it.

As for the dots [placed on the letters to distinguish them from each other] and its vowelling, then the first to do that was al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf[1] by the command of ᶜAbd al-Malik ibn Marwan[2], and al-Hajjaj added its [division into] hizbs. It has been said that the first to put dots [on the letters] was Yahya ibn Yaᶜmar, and it has been said that it was Abu'l-Aswad ad-Du'ali[3]. As for placing the tenths in it, it has been said al-Hajjaj did that, and it has been said that rather al-Ma'mun al-ᶜAbbasi[4] ordered him to do it.

As for its names, there are four: the Qur'an, the Furqan, the Kitab and the Dhikr, and all the other names are attributes not names, such as its description as al-ᶜAdheem (Vast), al-Kareem (Generous, Noble), al-ᶜAzeez (the Mighty), al-Majeed (Glorious), etc.

● As for [the word] "Qur'an", its origin is as a verbal noun ("reciting") of قَرَأَ "he recited" and then it was generalised for [that which is] "recited" (i.e. the passive participle[5]). ● As for "Furqan", it is

---

Makkah, Kufah, Damascus and Basra from Madinah – the centre of the Khilafah.

[1] Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf was in charge of the army under ᶜAbd al-Malik ibn Marwan, a post he held for twenty years. He founded the city of Wasit.

[2] ᶜAbd al-Malik ibn Marwan was the Umayyad Khalifah from 65-86 AH. He was a faqih and ᶜalim. Malik narrates his judgements which alone is sufficient evidence of the high esteem he held him in.

[3] Abu'l-Aswad ad-Du'ali is widely believed to be the founder of Arabic grammar, a task he undertook in obedience to the command of ᶜAli ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. He is said to have taken part in the negotiations with ᶜA'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, at the Battle of the Camel and he took part in the Battle of Siffin. He died during the great plague in Basra in 69 AH.

[4] The Abbasid Khalifah from 198-201 AH.

[5] Using فَعَلَ 'he did' we have فِعْل a verb or a 'doing', فَاعِل a subject or a 'doer' and مَفْعُول an object or a 'done' word. That is how Arabic grammar works, with doing, doer, done.

also a verbal noun whose meaning is "discrimination between truth and falsehood". ● As for "Kitab" it is a verbal noun ("writing"), and then it was generalised for [that which is] "written". ● As for "Dhikr", the Qur'an was named with it because of the remembrance of Allah in it or because of the reminder and the admonishments.

It is allowed in the Surahs of Qur'an to have the hamzah, but leaving out the hamzah[1] is the dialect of Quraysh.

As for ayah, its origin is "sign" and then the sentence (clause or phrase) from Qur'an was called that, because it is a sign of the truth of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

THE SECOND CHAPTER

On the Makkan and Madinan surahs

Know that the Makkan surahs are the ones which were revealed at Makkah and everything revealed before the Hijrah is counted among them [even] if revealed outside of Makkah. The surahs are divided into three categories:

● a category which is Madinan by consensus, and they are twenty-two surahs, which are the Cow, the Family of cImran, Women, the Table, the Spoils, Immunity, Light, the Confederates, Fighting, the Victory, the Apartments, Iron, She That Disputes, Exile, She that is to be Examined, the Rank, the Jumucah, the Hypocrites, Mutual Deceit, Divorce, The Forbidding, and "When comes the help of Allah…".

● There is a category about which there are different views as to whether they are Makkan or Madinan. They are thirteen surahs: The Umm al-Qur'an (Fatihah), Thunder, the Bee, the Hajj, Man, the Niggardly, Power (or the Decree), "Were not [the ones who disbelieved]…"[2], "When was shaken [the earth]…"[3], Sincerity[4], and the two by means of which refuge is sought (al-Mucawwidhatan)[5].

The word forms work like that as well, so that when you see a word on the form of مَفْعُول one knows that it is a passive participle, e.g. مَغْضُوب is an object of anger, the passive participle of غَضِبَ "he was angry".

[1] This is most in evidence in the recitation of Nafi' from Madinah, which we have in the two versions of North Africa today, Warsh and Qaloun.

[2] Surah al-Bayyinah (No. 98).

[3] Surah Az-Zalzalah (No. 99).

● There is a category which is Makkan by consensus, and they are all the rest of the surahs.

Sometimes Madinan ayat occur in a Makkan surah, just as Makkan ayat occur in a Madinan surah, but that is not often, and there are different views about most of them.

Know that most of the Makkan surahs were revealed in affirmation of the tenets of belief, in refutation of the people of shirk, and in narration of the stories of the prophets. Most of the Madinan surahs were revealed about judgements of the shari^c^ah, and in refutation of of the Jews and Christians, in mention of the hypocrites, rulings on some questions, and in mention of the battles of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Wherever, "O you who believe…" occurs, then it is Madinan. As for "O mankind…" then that occurs both in Makkan and Madinan [surahs].

THIRD CHAPTER

On the meanings and sciences which Qur'an contains

We will talk about that in general and in detail. As for in general, then you must know that what is intended by the Qur'an is the invitation of people to the worship of Allah, and entrance into His deen. Moreover, this purpose requires two matters, from which there is no escaping, and to which all of the meanings of the Qur'an relate.

● One of them is to make clear the worship which people are called to, ● and the other is the mention of the incentives which will instigate entrance into it (worship) and return them repeatedly to it.

As for worship, it consists of two divisions: the principles of the tenets of belief and the rules governing actions. As for the incentives for it (worship), there are two matters, which are: the awakening of desire and longing, and the awakening of fear.

As for in detail, then know that there are seven meanings in Qur'an, which are knowledge: of Lordship, of Prophethood, of the Final Abode, of Judgements, of Promise [of the reward and the Garden], of Threat [of punishment and the Fire], and of Stories.

---

[4] Surah al-Ikhlas (No. 112).

[5] Surahs al-Falaq and an-Nas (Nos. 113-114).

As for knowledge of Lordship (عِلْمُ الرُّبُوبِيَّة), of the establishing the existence of the Maker, majestic is His majesty, and seeking to prove it by His creations, then [there is] everything that is in Qur'an drawing attention to the creations, and considering the creation of the earth, the heavens, animals, plants, the wind and rains, the sun and moon, the night and the day, and other creations, each one of them is a proof of its Creator. There is affirmation of the Oneness, and refutation of the people of shirk, and identification of the attributes of Allah: life, knowledge, will, power, hearing, seeing and His other names and attributes. There is also the purifying Him of whatever [thought or concept] is not befitting to Him.

As for Prophethood (النُّبُوَّةُ), then there is the affirmation of the prophethood of the Prophets, peace be upon them, in general, and of the prophethood of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in particular. There is affirmation of the Books which Allah revealed to them, the existence of the angels of whom there are those who are mediums between Allah and them, and there is refutation of whoever disbelieved anything of that. Also included in this is what there is in Qur'an of consoling the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, honouring him and praising him, together with the rest of the prophets, may Allah bless him and them all and grant them peace.

As for the Final Abode, then there is affirmation of the Gathering (الْحَشْرُ), establishment of the proofs, and refutation of whoever disagrees about it, and a mention of that which is in the abode of the next-life of the Garden and the Fire, the Reckoning (الْحِسَابُ) and the Weighing (الْمِيزَانُ), the scrolls of actions, the great number of terrors, and the like of that.

As for Judgements (الأَحْكَامُ), they are commands and prohibitions, which are divided into five types: obligatory (وَاجِب), recommended (مَنْدُوب), forbidden (حَرَام), disapproved (مَكْرُوه) and permitted (مُبَاح). Of them there is: ● that which is connected to the body such as the salah and the fast; ● that which is connected to property such as the zakah; ● and that which is connected to hearts such as sincerity, fear and hope, etc.

As for the Promise (الْوَعْدُ), of it there is the promise [to the believers] of the best of the world such as help and victory, and other than that. And of it there is the promise of the best of the next-life, and it is the majority (more often mentioned in the Qur'an than the promise of help in the world), such as the qualities of the Garden and its bliss.

As for the Threat (الْوَعِيدُ), of it there is the awakening of fear of punishment in the world. Of it there is the awakening of fear of the punishment of the next-life, and it is the majority (more often mentioned in the Qur'an than punishment in the world), such as the descriptions of Jahannam and its torment, and the descriptions of the Resurrection and its terrors. Consider the Qur'an and you will find promise paired with threat, one of them mentioned immediately after the other, in order to unite the awakening of longing with the awakening of fear, and so that one will become distinct from the other, as it is said, "By their opposites, things become clear."

As for the Stories (الْقَصَصُ), they consist of mention of information on the previous prophets and of others, such as the story of the Companions of the Cave[1] and Dhu'l-Qarnayn[2]. If it is said, "What is the wisdom in the repetition of the stories of the prophets in the Qur'an?" Then the answer has three aspects: ● First, that He probably mentions information on the prophets in a surah which He does not mention in another surah; ● Second that the pieces of information on the prophets are mentioned in some places in the way of lengthy description and in other places in the way of concision, so that the eloquence of Qur'an should become clear in both ways; ● Third, that He intends various purposes by mentioning the informaton on the prophets, so that their mention is multiplied with the multiplication of those purposes. One of the purposes is proof of the prophethoods of the previous prophets by mentioning the miracles they brought about, and mentioning the destruction by various means of whoever denied them. There is proof of the prophethood of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Neither you nor your people knew it before this"[3]. There is affirmation of oneness; do you not see that when He mentioned the destruction of the disbelieving nations, "He said, 'Their gods did not enrich them, those which they called on apart from Allah, in any way.'"[4] Then there is reflection on the power of Allah, and the severity of His punishment for whoever disbelieved. There is the comforting of the Prophet, may Allah bless

---

[1] Surah al-Kahf ayat 9-28.

[2] Surah al-Kahf ayat 84-99.

[3] Surah Hud, ayah 49, referring to the story of the Prophet Nuh, peace be upon him, which is narrated in Surah Hud.

[4] Surah Hud, ayah 101.

him and grant him peace, for his people's calling him a liar, by finding consolation in whomever of the prophets had preceded him, such as His words, "And certainly messengers were called liars before you."[1] There is his being comforted, peace be upon him, and his being promised help as the prophets before him had been helped. There is the awakening of fear in the disbelievers in that they will be punished as the disbelievers before them were punished, and so on, of that which the stories of the prophets contain of astonishing things, exhortations and the arguments of the prophets, and their refutation of the disbelievers, etc. Since the news of the prophets show many different types of benefit, they are mentioned in many different places, and for every station there is a teaching.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER

On the different sorts of knowledge connected to Qur'an

Know that discourse on Qur'an requires discourse on twelve different sorts of knowledge, which are: commentary (التَّفْسِيرُ), the recitations (الْقِرَاءَاتُ), rulings (الأَحْكَامُ), abrogation (النَّسْخُ), hadith, stories, tasawwuf, the sources of the deen (أُصُولُ الدِّينِ), the sources of fiqh (أُصُولُ الْفِقْهِ), language (اللُّغَةُ), grammar (النَّحْوُ), and rhetoric (الْبَيَانُ clarification of meanings).

As for commentary, it is that which is itself intended and the rest of these arts are instruments which aid it, which are connected to it, or which branch off from it. The meaning of commentary is the explanation of Qur'an and clarification of its meaning, and making intelligible what it requires, either textually, by way of indication or in its grammar.

Know that commentary has in it that whereon there is agreement and that whereon there is a difference of view. That whereon there is a difference of view is of three types: ● First, difference in expression along with an agreement as to the meaning, and many authors count this as a type of disagreement, whereas in reality it is not a disagreement because of the agreement on the meaning. We have made this to be one statement, and we have expressed it by means of one of the expressions of earlier authorities, or with that which is close to it or that which unites its meanings. ● Second, disagreement in the quotation of examples because of the many examples which come under one meaning, and of which no example in particular is intended, but rather what is intended is the general meaning under which those examples are classified. Many authors count this too as a

[1] Surah al-Ancam, ayah 34.

disagreement, whereas in reality it is not a disagreement, since every statement on it is only an example, and it is not each one which is intended. Therefore we have not counted it as a disagreement. Rather we have expressed it with a general expression under which those would enter. We may have mentioned some of those statements in order to point out possible examples, while drawing attention to the general meaning which is intended. ● Third, there is disagreement in the meaning. This is the one we have counted as a [genuine] disagreement, and we have weighed the statements that people made accoording to the criteria we mentioned in the beginning of the book.

If it is said, "What is the difference between tafsir and ta'weel?" Then the answer is that there are three statements with respect to that: ● First, that they mean the same. ● Second, that tafsir is for the literal expression and ta'weel is for the meaning. ● Third, and it is the correct position, is that tafsir is explanation, while ta'weel is to relate the words to a meaning other than the meaning which the outward requires, according to a necessity which demands that it be related to that and not to its obvious outward meaning.

As for the recitations (الْقِرَاءَاتُ), they have the same status as narrations of hadith, so there must be an exactness about them just as there is exactness about the narration of hadith. Moreoever, there are two categories of recitations: well known (مَشْهُور) and irregular (شَاذّ). As for the well known, they are the seven recitations[1] and those which follow the same course, such as the recitation of Ya^cqub and Ibn Muhaysin. The irregular ones are any beyond these.

We have only based this book on the recitation of Nafi^c for two reasons: one of which is that it is the recitation most used in our cities of the Andalus and the rest of the cities of the Maghrib. The other is in order to emulate Madinah, may Allah ennoble it, because it is the recitation of the people of Madinah. Malik ibn Anas said, "The recitation of Nafi^c is sunnah."

We mention of the other recitations that in which there is benefit for the meaning or in the inflection [of word endings], etc., but not that in which there is no extra benefit. We have done without treating the recitations exhaustively because they are mentioned in works specifically composed

[1] The recitations of Nafi^c (d. 169 AH) of Madinah, Ibn ^cAmir al-Yahsubi (d. 118 AH) of Damascus, ^cAbdallah ibn Kathir (d. 120 AH) of Makkah, ^cAsiim ibn Abi an-Najud (d. 127 AH) of Kufah, Hamzah al-Qari' (d. 156 AH) of Kufah, ^cAli al-Kisai (d. 189 AH) of Baghdad and Abu ^cAmr ibn al-A^cla (d. 152 AH) of Basra.

on them. We have composed books on them, may Allah bring benefit by them. Also when we resolved upon being concise in this book, we ommited from it whatever was unnecessary and we have mentioned in these introductions a chapter on the principles of sources along with the recitations.

As for the judgements of Qur'an, they are the commands and prohibitions and issues of fiqh which appear in it. Some of the ᶜulama say, "There are five hundred ayat which relate to judgements." They will add up to more than that if examined deeply, and you will find them in their places [in the body of the tafsir]. People have composed many compilations on the judgements of Qur'an. Amongst the best compilations of the Easterners[1] on them are the works of Ismaᶜil al-Qadi and Ibn al-Hasan Kubah. One of the best compilations of the people of Andaluls is the work of the Qadi and Imam, Abu Bakr ibn al-ᶜArabi[2], and of the Qadi al-Hafidh ibn Muhammad ibn ᶜAbd al-Munᶜim ibn ᶜAbd ar-Rahim who is known as Ibn al-Fars.

As for abrogation, it is connected to judgements, as they are the zone in which abrogation occurs, since news cannot be abrogated. One must know the abrogating, abrogated and the decided (*muhkam*) – and it is that which is not abrogated – that occur in the Qur'an. People have composed many compilations upon the abrogating [ayat] of the Qur'an and its abrogated, the best of which is the work of the Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-ᶜArabi[3]. We have mentioned in these introductions a chapter on the principles of abrogation, and there is a mention of those [ayat] which are firmly established as being abrogated. The rest we mention in their places.

As for hadith, the commentator needs to [be able to] relate them and memorise them for two reasons: ● First, because many of the ayat of the Qur'an were revealed about particular people, and were revealed because of issues, battles, events and questions which occurred at the time of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. One has to know that in order to know about

---

[1] As Ibn Juzayy lived in al-Andalus, which is now part of modern Spain, he geographically refers to the Muslim world to the East of him as the 'Easterners' while the Muslim West would consist of al-Andalus and the Maghribi countries.

[2] *Kitab Ahkam al-Qur'an.*

[3] *Kitab an-Nasikh wa'l-Mansukh fi'l-Qur'an.*

whom it (an ayah) was revealed, about what it was revealed, and when it was revealed. The abrogating [ayah] is based on knowing the history of the revelation because the later abrogates the earlier. ● Second, that much commentary on Qur'an is narrated from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, so one has to know it, because his statement, peace be upon him, is given preferrence over the statements of people.

As for the stories, they are a part of the sciences which the Qur'an contains and commentary on them is unavoidable but has been restricted to that which is necessary, which is what the tafsir confines itself to. Anything else is extra and what one can do without. Some commentators relate a great many stories, both authentic and inauthentic, to the point that they mention that which it is not permitted to mention, of that in which there is attribution of a shortcoming in the position of the prophets, peace be upon them, or telling that which it is a duty to declare them free of (i.e. of scandals and slanders) as a story. As for us, we confine ourselves in this book to the stories upon which the tafsir depends and upon those authentic hadith narrated about them.

As for tasawwuf, it has a connection with the Qur'an, because of the divine gnoses, training of the selves, illumination of the hearts and purification of them by means of gaining praiseworthy qualities of character, and avoiding blameworthy qualities of character, which occur in the Qur'an. The people of tasawwuf have spoken in commentary on Qur'an. Of them there are those who did excellently well, and arrived by the light of their inner sight to the finest of meanings and applied themselves to the reality of what was intended. Of them there are those who pressed deeply into esotericism and related the Qur'an to that which the Arabic language does not require.

Abu ᶜAbd ar-Rahman as-Sulami[1] gathered their words on tafsir together in a book which he called "Realities (*haqa'iq*)". One of the ᶜulama said, "Rather they are falsehoods," but if we are fair we would say that there are realities and falsehoods in it. We have mentioned those sufic indications

---

[1] Abu ᶜAbd ar-Rahman as-Sulami (d. 412 AH) is the famed author of *Tabaqat as-Sufiyyah*, on the lives of the early Sufis. He lived in Nisabur and wrote extensively on a variety of subjects. Adh-Dhahabi (d. 748 AH), author of the *Tadhkirat al-Huffadh* on the science of Asma' ar-Rijal quotes from the *Tabaqat* sparingly in his *Tarikh al-Islam al-Kabir* and considered as-Sulami a trustworthy source. The *haqa'iq at-tafseer* mentioned above quotes the tafseer made on Qur'an by eminent early Sufis up to the time of as-Sulami.

which are regarded as good in this book, but not those which are objected to or censured. And we have spoken about it.

We have also spoken about twelves stations of tasawwuf in their places in the Qur'an: ● We have spoken about gratitude (الشُّكْرُ) in the Umm al-Qur'an (the Fatihah) because of the way that praise and thanks share in meaning; ● and we have spoken on taqwa in respect to His words, exalted is He, in al-Baqarah, "Guidance for the people of taqwa,"[1]; ● and upon dhikr on His words in it (al-Baqarah), "Then remember Me and I will remember you,"[2]; ● and on patience (الصَّبْرُ) in His words, exalted is He, "And give goods news to the patient,"[3]; ● and on tawhid in His words in it (al-Baqarah), "And your god is one god,"[4]; ● and on love of Allah (الْمَحَبَّةُ) in His words in it (al-Baqarah), "And the ones who believe are stronger in love of Allah,"[5]; ● and on dependence (التَّوَكُّلُ) on Allah in His words in Ali ᶜImran, "Then when you have resolved, depend on Allah,"[6]; ● on fearful watchfulness (الْمُرَاقَبَةُ) in His words in an-Nisa, "Truly Allah is over you watchful,"[7]; ● and on fear (الْخَوْفُ) and hope (الرَّجَاءُ) in His words in al-Aᶜraf, "And call Him fearfully and hopefully,"[8]; ● on repentance (التَّوْبَةُ) in His words in an-Nur, "And turn [all of you] to Allah together,"[9]; ● and on sincerity (الإِخْلاَصُ) in His words in al-Bayyinah, "And they were not commanded but that they should worship Allah sincerely for Him the deen"[10].

As for the sources of the deen (أُصُولُ الدِّينِ), they are connected to the Qur'an from two points of view: one of which is that which occurs in the Qur'an of affirmation of the tenets of faith,

---

[1] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 2.

[2] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 152.

[3] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 155.

[4] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 163.

[5] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 165.

[6] Surah Ali ᶜImran, ayah 159.

[7] Surah an-Nisa', ayah 1.

[8] Surah al-Aᶜraf, ayah 56.

[9] Surah an-Nur, ayah 31.

[10] Surah al-Bayyinah, ayah 5.

establishing the proofs for them, and refutation of the different types of disbelievers. The other is that which the different groups of Muslims connect to the Qur'an, each group arguing for its school and refuting whoever disagrees with it, claiming that it [the other group] opposes the Qur'an. There is no doubt that there are those of them who are telling the truth and those who are lying. So knowledge of commentary of Qur'an has the result that you will be made to arrive at a precise determination along with strengthening, and aid and the granting of success are from Allah.

As for the principles of fiqh (أُصُولُ الْفِقْهِ), they are some of the instruments for commentary on the Qur'an, yet many comentators have not occupied themselves with them, even though they are a great help in understanding the meanings and in weighing [people's] statements. How urgently the commentator needs to know: ● the text (النَّصُّ), ● the outward [statement] (الظَّاهِرُ), ● the general concept (الْمُجْمَلُ), ● the distinguishing (الْمُبِينُ), ● the universal (الْعَامُ), ● the particular (الْخَاصُّ), ● the absolute (الْمُطْلَقُ), ● the limited (الْمُقَيَّدُ), ● the import of the address, ● the implication of the address, ● the indication of the address, ● the preconditions of abrogation, ● aspects of contradiction, ● causes of disagreement (أَسْبَابُ الْخِلاَفِ), ● and other things of the knowledge of the principles [of fiqh].

As for language, the commentator must memorise that of it which occurs in Qur'an, the unusual words of the Qur'an which constitute one of the sciences of tafsir. People have composed many works on the unusual words of the Qur'an. We have mentioned an introduction on vocabulary which occurs many times in the Qur'an after this introduction so that we don't need to mention it every time it occurs for then the book would become lengthy from repitition. (The relevant parts of Ibn Juzayy's dictionary of terms are woven into the text at the appropriate places).

As for grammar, the commentator must know it. The Qur'an was revealed in the language of the Arabs and so it needs knowledge of the language. Grammar has two divisions: ● one of which is the elements of inflection (of the case endings of word, i.e. الإِعْرَابُ), and they are the rules of structured speech. ● The other is declension [of word forms, i.e. الصَّرْفُ] which is the rules governing words from the point of view of their construction. We mention in this book, on inflection [of case endings of words] that is in the Qur'an, that which is needed of the unclear and that which is disagreed about, or that which would help to understand the meaning, or that whereby the meaning would change according to its [the inflection's] changing. We do not turn to

anything else, such as simple inflection, which no-one needs except for the beginner, because that would become lengthy without any great benefit.

As for the knowledge of rhetoric, it is a noble science by which the eloquence of the Qur'an becomes clear. We mention outstanding benefits of it in this book, and points which are clear and pleasurable. We have placed a chapter on the instruments of rhetoric in the introductions in order that that which occurs in different places of the Qur'an may be understood.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER

On the causes of disagreement among the commentators and the ways by which one weighs their statements

As for the reasons for disagreement, there are twelve: ● First is the differing of the Qur'an; ● Second, the differing ways of inflection [of the case endings of words] even when the recitations agree; ● Third, the differences of the linguists as to the meaning of a word; ● Fourth, a word's sharing in two or more meanings; ● Fifth, the possibility of having a general [meaning] or a particular [meaning]; ● Sixth, the possibility of it having an absolute meaning or a restricted meaning; ● Seventh, the possibility of its having a literal or a metaphoric meaning; ● Eighth, the possibility of there being an ellipsis (i.e. words understood which are not said) or an independent meaning [that doesn't need one to assume an ellipsis]; ● Ninth, the possibility of there being an extra word [mentioned in the text, such as "that" or "what", whose meaning is not needed]; ● Tenth, the possibility of making the speech accord with the sequential arrangement [of the words] or with advancing [a word in the sequential arrangement] or putting it later [in the sequential arrangement]; ● Eleventh, the possibility that the judgement is either abrogated or unequivocal; ● Twelfth, disagreement in tafsir related from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and from the salaf (the first generations of Islam) may Allah be pleased with them.

As for the ways of deciding which is the weightier view (التَّرْجِيحُ) they are twelve: ● First, there is explaining part of the Qur'an with another part, for if a place in Qur'an indicates the meaning in another place, then we will make it accord with it and give more weight to the statement that agrees with that than to any other statement; ● Second, the hadith of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, for if there is anything from him, peace be upon him, in tafsir of the Qur'an we will rely upon it, particularly if it occurs in an authentic hadith; ● Third, that the statement is

the statement of the majority or most of the commentators, for a great number of people (i.e. men of knowledge) making the same statement requires that we consider it the weightiest; ● Fourth, that the statement is from some of the Companions who are emulated such as the Four Khulafa, and ᶜAbdullah ibn ᶜAbbas, because of the saying of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "O Allah give him (ᶜAbdullah ibn ᶜAbbas) understanding (fiqh) in the deen and teach him interpretation (ta'weel)"; ● Fifth, that the speech of the Arabs should indicate the soundness of the statement, whether through idiom, inflection [of word endings], declension [of word forms], or etymological derivation; ● Sixth, that the import of the speech should bear witness for the authenticity of the statement, and that what is before it and after it should indicate it; ● Seventh, that the meaning should be immediately perceptible to the intellect because that is an indication of its being obvious and the weightier [view]; ● Eighth, giving preference to the literal [meanings] over the metaphorical, because the literal is more worthy of making the exterior form of the words accord with it in the view of the people of sources (of usul). However the metaphorical is considered to have more weight if its usage is so frequent that it is more often used than the literal, and then it is called "the outweighing metaphor" and the literal is considered to be outweighed. The ᶜulama differ as to which of the two has precedence. The position of Abu Hanifah was to give preference to the literal, and the position of Abu Yusuf[1] was to give precedence to the outweighing metaphor, because of its weightiness. Sometimes the metaphor is more eloquent and more excellent so that it is weightier. ● Ninth, to give precedence to the general over the particular, because the general is more fitted because it is the source, unless there is an indication that it is a particular [meaning]; ● Tenth, to give precedence to the absolute over the limited and restricted, unless there is something that indicates the limited and restricted [meaning]; ● Eleventh, to give precedence to [that which is] true as it stands, over an ellipsis, unless there is an indication of ellipsis; ● Twelfth, to make the words accord with their sequential arrangement unless there is an indication of [a word] having been advanced or put back [in the word order].

---

[1] Abu Yusuf Yaᶜqub ibn Ibrahim (d. 182 AH). He was from Kufah and the main student of Abu Hanifah as well as the Kufan fiqh of Ibn Abi Layla. Towards the end of his life he was appointed as qadi of Baghdad and was the first to be called *qadi al-qudat* (chief judge) in Islamic history at the instigation of Harun ar-Rashid, the Abbasid Khalifah, at whose request he wrote his famous *Kitab al-Kharaj.*

THE SIXTH CHAPTER

In mention of the commentators

Know that the right-acting first generations (السَّلَفُ الصَّالِحُ) were in two divisions: ● There were those who made commentary on the Qur'an and spoke on its meanings, and they were the majority. ● Also there were those who held back from talking about it out of caution because of the severe warnings about doing that. ^{c}A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, would not comment on the ayat of Qur'an until he had knowledge of them from Jibril." And he said, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Whoever speaks about Qur'an according to his own view and is correct has made a mistake." The commentators interpreted the hadith of ^{c}A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, that it was about the unseen matters in the Qur'an which cannot be known but by the grace of Allah, exalted is He. The other hadith is interpreted to mean that it is about whoever speaks on Qur'an without knowledge and without [scholarly] instruments, not about one who speaks about that which the instruments of the sciences require, and looks into the sayings of the earlier ^{c}ulama, because such a one does not speak about Qur'an from his own view.

Know that there are degrees among the commentators: ● The first degree is the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the one who said the most in commentary is Ibn ^{c}Abbas. ^{c}Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, used to praise the commentary of Ibn ^{c}Abbas, saying, "It is as if he were looking into the unseen through a fine veil." Ibn ^{c}Abbas said, "That commentary on the Qur'an which I have is from ^{c}Ali ibn Abi Talib." There followed them ^{c}Abdullah ibn Mas^{c}ud, Ubayy ibn Ka^{c}b, Zayd ibn Thabit, ^{c}Abdullah ibn ^{c}Umar ibn al-Khattab, and ^{c}Abdullah ibn ^{c}Amr ibn al-^{c}As. Everything that has been reported of the Companions' commentary is good. ● The second degree is that of the followers (التَّابِعُون), and the best of them in talking about commentary are al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan al-Basri, Sa^{c}id ibn Jubayr, Mujahid the freed slave of Ibn ^{c}Abbas and ^{c}Alqamah the companion of ^{c}Abdullah ibn Mas^{c}ud. Following them are ^{c}Ikrimah, Qatadah, as-Sa^{c}di, ad-Dahhak ibn Mazahim, Abu Salih and Abu Afsah al-^{c}Aliyah. ● Then later, upright people of every succeeding generation undertook to carry the responsibility of commentary on Qur'an. People composed works on it, such as al-Mufaddal, ^{c}Abd ar-Razzaq, ^{c}Abd ibn Humayd, al-Bukhari, ^{c}Ali ibn Abi Talhah and others. Then later Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabari gathered together the

statements of the commentators and perfected the study of them. Of those who wrote something on tafsir are: Abu Bakr an-Naqqash, ath-Thaᶜlabi and al-Mawardi, except that their words need checking and revision, and people corrected some of them. Abu Muhammad ibn Qutaybah compiled much of its sciences on the unusual words of Qur'an and its problematic [passages]. A group of the grammarians compiled works on the meanings of Qur'an, such as Abu Ishaq az-Zujaj, Abu ᶜAli al-Farisi and Abu Jaᶜfar an-Nuhasi.

As for the people of the Maghrib and Andalus, the Qadi Mundhir ibn Saᶜid al-Baluti compiled a book on the unusual words of Qur'an and their commentary. Then the teacher of Qur'an recitation, Abu Muhammad Makki ibn Abi Talib compiled the book [called] *Al-Hidayah – the Guidance* in commentary on Qur'an, a book on the unusual words of Qur'an, a book on the abrogating [ayat] of Qur'an and its abrogated [ayat], a book on the inflection [of word endings] of the Qur'an, and other works, which are almost eighty works, most of which are on the sciences of the Qur'an, the recitations, commentary, etc. As for Abu ᶜAmr ad-Dani, his writings are more than a hundred and twenty, and most of them are on the Qur'an, yet he only wrote a little on tafsir. As for Abu'l-ᶜAbbas al-Mahdi he was a perfectionist in his works, in beautiful arrangement and in gathering together the different sorts of the sciences of Qur'an.

Then there were the two Qadis, Abu Bakr ibn al-ᶜArabi[1] and Abu Muhammad ᶜAbd al-Haqq ibn ᶜAtiyyah[2]. Both of them achieved unique and beautiful results. As for Ibn al-ᶜArabi he compiled the

---

[1] Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-ᶜArabi (d. 542 AH) is not to be confused with the great Sufi Shaykh Muhyi'd-Din ibn al-ᶜArabi. Qadi Abu Bakr travelled with his father extensively in the east meeting the great ᶜUlama of his time and remaining there for a number of years. Qadi Abu Bakr had also travelled to the east at the instigation of Yusuf ibn Tashfin to render Ibn Tashfin's allegiance to the Khalifah in Baghdad and to seek his appointment as Amir al-Muslimin (he refused his followers' wish that the take the Khalifah's title of Amir al-Muminin) in the Iberian Peninsula and the Maghrib. The Khalifah received the Qadi with great honour and confirmed the appointment of Ibn Tashfin.

In 528 AH he was appointed the Qadi of Seville, which post he held for a year and some months. He undertook the task with such vigour that he made many enemies and was forced to retire to Cordoba and devote himself to teaching and writing. He lived until the Muwahhidun conquest of Spain and the Maghrib.

[2] ᶜAbd al-Haqq ibn ᶜAtiyyah (d. 541 AH in Lorca, Spain). He lived towards the end of the period of the Murabitun, and was appointed Qadi in Almeria in 529 AH. It is reported that when he heard of his appointment he

book, *The Lights of the Dawn* which was at the utmost limit of endeavour and comprehensiveness in the sciences of the Qur'an. When it was destroyed he corrected it with the book, *The Canon of Interpretation*, except that desire destroyed it before its purification and summarisation. He composed many useful works on the rest of the sciences of Qur'an. As for Ibn ᶜAtiyyah, his book on tafsir is the best of the compositions and the most balanced of them, for he studied the works of whoever had preceded him and trimmed them and summarised them. Along with that he has a wonderful mode of expression, whose view is of sure and good judgement, guarding the sunnah.

Then the science of Qur'an was sealed in the Andalus and the rest of the Maghrib by our Shaykh, the Ustadh, Abu Jaᶜfar ibn az-Zubayr. He spent his whole life in the service of the Qur'an, and Allah gave him an expanse of its knowledge, He strengthened him with its understanding, and he has an exactitude with respect to it, and an acute vision.

Of the works of the people of the East that are in our hands there is the commentary of Ibn al-Qasim az-Zamakhshari[1], whose view is of sure and good judgement, excelling in knowledge of the inflection of the case endings of words, a perfectionist in the science of rhetoric, except that he filled his book with the Muᶜtazilah school and their mischief, and he made the ayat of Qur'an accord with their path and so muddied its purity, and made its sweetness bitter. So take from him what is pure and leave what is muddy. As for al-Qunawi, his book is succinct, and there are marvellous points of tasawwuf in it. As for Ibn al-Khateeb, his book contains that which is in the book of az-Zamakhshari and he augmented it with a copious amount of the principles of the science of kalam (theology), and he composed it according to the structural arrangement of the cases [of fiqh], and it is of a precise view in some places. It is, in general a book of great bulk, which probably needs summarisation. May Allah benefit all by the service of His Book and reward them the most bountiful of His rewards.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

---

entered his house sad and depressed.

[1] *Al-Kashaf ᶜan Haqa'iq at-tanzil*

On the abrogating and the abrogated[1]

Abrogation in language is removal and transferrance. Its meaning in the shariᶜah is the lifting of a judgement of shariᶜah after it had been revealed. It occurs in the Qur'an in three forms: ● First, the abrogation of the literal expression and its meaning (نَسْخُ اللَّفْظِ وَالْمَعْنَى), such as in His words, "Do not forsake your parents for that is disbelief (or ingratitude) in you"2; ● Second, the abrogation of the literal expression apart from the meaning (نَسْخُ اللَّفْظِ دُونَ الْمَعْنَى) as in His words, "The mature man and the mature woman if they commit adultery, then stone them decidedly, as an exemplary punishment from Allah. And Allah is mighty, wise"3; ● Third, the abrogation of the meaning apart from the literal expression (نَسْخُ الْمَعْنَى دُونَ اللَّفْظ), which very often occurs in

[1] As-Suyuti, in his *Itqan fi ᶜUlum al-Qur'an*, records that there is no doubt that the science of the Abrogated and the Abrogating is a necessity for any person who sets out to give commentary of the Qur'an. It is reported by Abu ᶜAbd ar-Rahman that ᶜAli, may Allah ennoble his face, passed by a Qadi in Kufah and asked him, "Do you know the Abrogating (نَاسِخ) and the abrogated (مَنْسُوخ)?" He replied that he didn't. ᶜAli said, "You are destroyed and you will cause others to be destroyed!" (Ibn Hazm, p. 2, Abu ᶜUbaid al-Qasim ibn Sallam *Kitab an-Nasikh wa'l-Mansukh bab 'Fadl ᶜIlm Nasikh al-Qur'an'*).

[2] This has been taken by some authorities to be abrogation of the literal expression but not the meaning so that the injunction is still operative, see *An-Nasikh wa'l-Mansukh* by Imam ᶜAbdallah ibn Hazm (d. 456 AH).

[3] The words 'mature man' (الشَّيْخ) and 'mature woman' (الشَّيْخَة) here are taken to refer to a married man and a married woman respectively. It was about this ayah that the Khalifah ᶜUmar ibn al-Khattab said, "Had it not been for the fear of people saying "Umar has made an addition to the Qur'an', I would have added this to the Qur'an." This has been quoted in Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali's *Al-Mustasfa min ᶜIlm al-Usul* which is on the science of the foundations of fiqh, and has been quoted extensively by other authors on the same topic, and has been taken from the *Musnad* of Ahmad ibn Hanbal and the collection of an-Nasa'i. There is a similar report from ᶜUmar, may Allah be pleased with him, in which he expressed fear of people saying, "We do not find the punishment of stoning in the Book of Allah" so that they would go astray by abandoning this duty prescribed by Allah. This has been recorded by al-Bukhari, and by Muslim in his *Sahih*, in the chapter '*Rajm ath-thayib fi zina'* from Malik. For an exposition of this topic reference can be made to *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-ᶜAdhim* by Ibn Kathir, the commentary of Surah Nur, ayah 2. Abu Qahir al-Baghdadi says in his book *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* that the only group of Muslims he knew of who refused to admit this hadd were the Azraiqa sect of the Khariji, as the hadd is also established by the Sunnah, as recorded by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal and the authors of the *Sunan* collections.

the Qur'an. Some of the ᶜulama count it as two hundred and twelve places which have been abrogated, except that they count particularisation (تَخْصِيص) and restriction (تَقْيِيد) as abrogation, and exception (إِسْتِثْنَاء) as abrogation, and between these things and abrogation there is a very well known distinction.

We will talk about that in its places, but here we will introduce the abrogation of making peace with the disbelievers, pardoning them, turning away from them, and patience at their harm, with the [abrogating] command to fight them, so that it will suffice us from repeating it in its places. Concerning this, there are one hundred and fourteen ayat that occur in Qur'an from out of fifty-four surahs.

So in al-Baqarah, "And say the best to mankind", "And to us belong our actions…", "and do not aggress" meaning do not begin the fighting, "and do not fight them…", "Say, 'Fighting…'" "[There is] no compulsion…", ● in Ali ᶜImran "You are only responsible for conveying…", "…then take precautions against them", ● in an-Nisa "then turn away from them" in two places, "so We have not sent you as a guardian over them", "you are not made responsible except for yourself", "…except for the ones who reach…", ● in al-Ma'idah "…and not those taking themselves to…", "you are responsible for conveying…", "you are responsible for yourselves", ● in al-Anᶜam "you are not a guardian over them", "then abandon them", "…over you a guardian", "and turn away…", "…over them a guardian", "and do not abuse…", determined for them in two places "O my people act…", "say, 'Look…'", "you are not of them in anything", ● in al-Aᶜraf "then turn away", "and I will respite them…", ● in al-Anfal "and if they seek help from you…" meaning [from you] the people of Jihad. ● In at-Tawbah, "so be straightforward with them…" ● in Yunus, "so wait", "then say, 'I have my action…'", "and if We show you…", "and do not let it sadden you what they say", because of what it contains of granting a respite, "so will you compel…?", "then whoever is guided…" because its meaning is granting a respite, "and be patient", ● in Hud "you are only a warner" i.e. "you warn and you do not compel", "act according to your situation", "wait", ● in ar-Raᶜd "you are responsible for conveying", ● in an-Nahl "…except for the conveying", "you are responsible for conveying", "and argue with them…", "and be patient", ● in al-Isra "your Lord knows you best", and in Maryam "so warn them", "and so will prolong", "and do not be hasty", ● in Ta-Ha "say, 'Each is waiting'", ● in al-Hajj "and if they argue with you…", ● in al-Muminun "so abandon

them”, “repel…”, ● in an-Nur “then if they turn away…”, “and the Messenger is not responsible for anything but conveying”, ● in an-Naml “so whoever is guided” ● in al-Qasas “we have our actions…”, ● in al-^{c}Ankabut “I am a warner” because of what it decrees of not [using] force, ● in ar-Rum “then be patient”, ● in Luqman “then whoever disbelieves…”, ● in as-Sajdah “and await…”, ● in al-Ahzab “and leave their harm…”, ● in Saba’ “say, ‘you will not be asked…’”, ● in Fatir “you are naught but a warner…”, ● in Yasin “so do not let it sadden you…”, ● in as-Saffat “so a word…” and “a word…” and that which follows the two of them, ● in Sad “be patient”, “I am a warner”, ● in az-Zumar “truly Allah will decide between them” because of the granting of respite that is in it, “so worship whatever you wish”, “O my people act…”, “so whoever is guided…”, “You decide…” because there is the handing over [of affairs] in it, ● in al-Mumin “so be patient” in two places, ● in as-Sajdah (Fussilat) “repel…”, ● in ash-Shura “and you are not a guardian over them”, “we have our actions…”, “then if they turn away…”, ● in az-Zukhruf “then abandon them…”, “and pardon…”, ● in ad-Dukhan “then wait in anticipation…”, ● in al-Jathiyah “…they forgive…”, ● and in al-Ahqaf “so be patient”, ● in al-Qital (Muhammad) “then either gracious largesse…”1, ● in Qaf “then be patient”, “and you are not…”, ● in adh-Dhariyat “then a word…”, ● and in at-Tur “say, ‘Wait expectantly…’”, “and be patient”, “then abandon them” ● in an-Najm “then turn away…”, ● and in al-Qamar “then a word…”, ● in Nun “then be patient”, “We will take them little by little…”, ● in al-Ma^{c}arij “then be patient”, “so abandon them”, ● in al-Muzzammil “then leave them…”, ● in al-Muddaththir “and leave Me…”, ● in al-Insan “then be patient”, ● in at-Tariq “then grant a respite to the disbelievers”, ● in al-Ghashiyah “you are not a guardian over them”, ● in al-Kafirun “to you your deen…”.

---

[1] It is also said that this command is still operative. Ibn Juzayy says in his book *Ahkam Tashil at-Tanzil* “With regards to ayah 4 of Surah Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, it is said that graciousness and ransoming are not acceptable because the ayah is abrogated by Allah’s words ‘**Kill the mushrikin…**’ but the correct view is that the ayah’s judgements are valid.” This is also the position of the four Khulafa ar-Rashidun, ibn ^{c}Umar, ibn ^{c}Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, and also that of Malik, ash-Shafi^{c}i, al-Awza^{c}i, Abu ^{c}Ubayd (ibn Salam) and the overwhelming majority of the salaf, may Allah have mercy on them, as the judgements of the ayat can be acted upon and there is no genuine need to repeat the ruling to ransom prisoners or free them.

"Kill the people of shirk…" and "fighting has been ordained for you…" abrogate all of the aforegoing[1].

---

[1] The author, Ibn Juzayy, has here listed those ayat of Qur'an whose legal import were later repealed by the command for the Muslims to fight. It is well known that the order to fight, as with the case of the prohibition of drinking intoxicants, was one which was revealed gradually, stage by stage, in order to show the Muslims the best and most praiseworthy way of acting through actual experience rather than imposing something on them at one instant.

The ruling with regards to fighting was His words, exalted is He, in Surah an-Nisa, ayah 77, "**hold back their hands and establish the prayer**", the meaning of "hold back their hands" being from fighting. This was when Islam was weak and the Muslims were in no position to take up Jihad. As the Muslims gained strength in Madinah, the permission to fight in self-defence was given in Surah al-Hajj, ayah 39 "**and permission is given because…**". Then Allah raised up the Muslims after they had been low in the land and honoured them by prescribing fighting in order to spread Islam. He, exalted is He, said, "**And fight them until there is no more turmoil,**" Surah al-Anfal, ayah 39, and "**Fight those who don't believe in Allah and the Last Day…**" Surah at-Tawbah, ayah 29, which is one of the clearest and most revealing ayat concerning fighting.

One modern scholar has claimed, in an attempt to re-assess the Islamic sciences at the behest of "hostorical methodology and critique" a methodology which can criticise anything but can't itsef be criticised or examined, that the Nasikh and Mansukh was largely a circumstance of history and was not intended to be a permanent phenomenon. This in turn would logically imply the possibility of the return to an old injunction that had been abrogated by a change in historical circumstance. On this basis any of the hudud of Allah could logically be deemed to be historicall and not universal as is already being done.

The Creator has shown that it is in the nature of man to regress to that which is harmful tohim unless he has clear limits (hudud) within which society as a whole is safe, and it is not for mere mortals to legislate and say what they, the limits, are from their own opinions. This is why many scholars have used the terms Nasikh and Mansukh to denote Muhkam (those ayat which are legally operative) and Mutashabihat (those which are not legally operative and require qualification) respectively, as the judgement (hukm) contained within the Mansukh ayat have been suspended by the Nasikh.

This is not a debate between 'Traditional' and 'Modern' Islam, as both, when part of an ongoing dialectic, are inadequate for the questions that the Muslims face today.

The judgement with regards to fighting, as with the case of usury (riba) and fornication (zina) are not just 'classical' theories but the limits which Allah has set, and if studied and investigated on their own terms, from the sources, without the inbuilt necessity to arrive at a predetermined position vis-a-vis acceptability to the enemies of the

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

On concise words on the recitations

There are two types: well-known (مَشْهُور) and irregular (شَاذّ). ● The well-known are the seven recitations; which are the modes of Nafi^c the Madinan, Ibn Katheer the Makkan, Abu ^cUmar ibn al-^cAla al-Basri, Ibn ^cAmir ash-Shami, and ^cAsim, Ibn Hamzah and al-Kisa'i who were all from Kufah. The following took the same course as them in soundness and being well-known: Ya^cqub al-Khudri ibn Muhaysin and Yazid ibn al-Qa^cqa^c. ● The irregular are all the others. They are called irregular because of their lack of sound transmission, even though they might be eloquent in outward expression, or strong in meaning.

It is not permitted to recite a mode without one of three pre-conditions [being fulfilled]: ● it must be in complete agreement with the mushaf of ^cUthman ibn ^cAffan, may Allah be pleased with him; ● in complete accordance with the speech of the Arabs, even if it be from one aspect or one dialect; ● and its transmission must be mutawatir (by large numbers of people in each generation from large numbers of people, right back to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace) or widely spread abroad.

---

deen and compromise, will lead to clear injunctions on the issues involved.

Allah, exalted is He, says in Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 216, "**Fighting has been prescribed for you even though you dislike it, but it is possible that you dislike a thing and it is good for you**" and it is agreed that the word possible (عَسَى) when used by Allah means "it is definite", "**and it is possible that you love something that is bad for you.**" Ibn Kathir says that this statement is general and applies to all matters of the deen, "**and Allah knows**" what is better for you "**and you know not**" meaning that He is more knowledgeable of what will ensue from the command than you and more aware of that in which is your good in this world and the next. (Ibn Kathir *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-^cAdhim*, Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 216).

الإستعاذة – The Seeking Refuge

Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbi said in his dictionary of terms:

> عَاذَ with Allah, يَعُوذُ [the latter the present tense] i.e. he sought protection with, so that He might repel from him what he fears. اسْتَعَاذَ and يَسْتَعِيذُ[1] are also said [with the same meaning]. Of it there is عُذْتُ بِرَبِّي "I have sought refuge with my Lord"[2] and مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ "[I seek] the refuge of Allah!"[3]

Then he continues in the text of the commentary:

> There are ten different points of interest [in the Seeking of Refuge].
>
> First: the wording of seeking refuge has five forms, ● "I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytan" which is narrated from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and which the reciters choose and prefer; ● there is "I seek refuge with Allah the Vast from the accursed Shaytan", ● and "I seek refuge with Allah the Strong from Shaytan the deviant", ● and "I seek refuge with Allah the Glorious from Shaytan the insolent", and these are all originated and innovated, ● and "I seek refuge with Allah the All-Hearing the All-Knowing from Shaytan the accursed", and this [too] is related from the Prophet[4], may Allah bless him and grant him peace.
>
> Second: the reciter is ordered to [recite] the [dhikr of] seeking refuge before his recitation, whether he has begun a surah or a part of a surah, as something he is called upon to do [as distinct from something he is obliged to do].
>
> Third: he must pronounce the seeking refuge aloud according to the majority and that is the chosen position on it. Reciting it silently is related of Hamzah and Nafiᶜ.
>
> Fourth: one does not seek refuge [from Shaytan] during the prayer according to Malik. According to ash-Shafiᶜi[5] and Abu Hanifah you do so in the first rakᶜah, and according to some other people

---

[1] The past and present tenses of the Xth form of the verb.

[2] Surah al-Ghafir, ayah 27.

[3] Surah Yusuf, ayah 23.

[4] Narrated by Ahmad from Abu Saᶜid al-Khudri in his *Musnad* and in the four *Sunan* collections.

[5] Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafiᶜi (d. 204 AH) was a student of Malik in his early years who later went on to study with the Kufan Muhammad ibn Hasan ash-Shaybani. He is the founder of what later became known as the

one does so in every rakᶜah[1]. Malik’s proof was the practice of the people of Madinah; Others’ proof is the word of Allah, exalted is He, “Then when you recite the Qur’an seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytan”[2], which is [for them] a general command which applies to the prayer and other situations.

Fifth: “I seek refuge …” is reported with the mudariᶜ (present and future tense) rather than the madi (past tense) because the meaning of the act of seeking refuge is not connected to anything but the future, as is supplication. It is only narrated with the hamzah of the first person singular to conform with the command in His words فَاسْتَعِذْ “… then [you: masculine singular] seek refuge …!”[3]

Sixth: الشَّيْطَانُ can mean the genus, so that the act of seeking refuge will be from all Shaytans, or it can be specific so that the act of seeking refuge would be from Iblis. It is [derived] from شَطَنَ [he became far away, far from the mercy of Allah] since he بَعُدَ [he became far away]. In this case the letter ن is one of the root letters and the ي is extra, and its measure [in sarf] is فَيْعَالٌ. It has also been said that its derivation is from شَاطَ (it burned or became burnt) since he هَاجَ (he became excited, stirred up), so that the ن is extra and the ي is an original root letter, and its measure is فَعْلَانٌ. If you employ it as a name it is not declined according to the latter form (i.e. from شَاطَ) because the ا and ن are extra, but the former (i.e. from شَطَنَ) is declined.

Seventh: الرَّجِيمُ is on the pattern فَعِيلٌ with the meaning of مَفْعُولٌ (i.e. the passive participle of the verb) and it can have two possible meanings; [either] ‘accursed’ [or] ‘driven away, expelled’ and

---

Shafiᶜi school of fiqh. His most famous composition is his *ar-Risalah fi Usul al-Fiqh*. He also wrote the *Kitab al-Umm* and his *Kitab Ahkam al-Qur’an.*

[1] This opinion is related from Imam Ahmad and some of his companions. The divergence centres around whether the fuqaha considered the recitation of the Qur’an in the prayer as one recitation – the majority opinion – or whether the recitation in each rakᶜah constituted a separate recitation in which case the seeking of refuge would be recited in each rakᶜah.

[2] Surah an-Nahl, ayah 98.

[3] Ibid.

this [latter] fits His saying, "And We made them (the meteors) things to be cast at the shaytans"[1] but the former is more obvious.

Eighth: whoever truly and sincerely seeks refuge with Allah, He will give him refuge, so be sincere! Have you not considered the wife of ᶜImran when she sought refuge for Maryam and her (Maryam's) descendants, then Allah protected her?[2] In the sound hadith it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Shaytan pricks every child born so that he cries, except for the son of Maryam and his mother."[3]

Ninth: Shaytan is an enemy. Allah has cautioned against him so there is no hope that the cause of his enmity will pass away. He courses within the son of Adam with the flowing of his blood.[4] First of all he tells him to disbelieve and he makes him have doubt in his iman, so that if he is able…, and if not he tells him to do acts of disobedience, so that if he obeys him …, and if not he hinders him from acts of obedience. Then if he is saved from that, he ruins his acts of obedience by involving him in showing off and conceit [in his acts].

Tenth: the things which cut one off from Allah are four: ● Shaytan, ● the self (النَّفْسُ), ● the world ● and people (الْخَلْقُ).

● The cure for Shaytan is to seek refuge from him and oppose him. ● The cure for the self is to subdue it. ● The cure for the world is doing-without (زُهْد). ● The cure for people is withdrawal and isolation.

---

[1] Surah al-Mulk, ayah 5.

[2] Surah Ali ᶜImran, ayah 36, "**And I have called her Maryam and have sought refuge with You for her and her descendants from the accursed Shaytan**".

[3] Narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah.

[4] This is a hadith that has been reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Indeed Shaytan circulates in the body like the circulation of blood".

البسملة – The Basmalah

There are ten points of benefit:

First: according to Malik, the Basmalah is not an ayah of the Fatihah nor of anything else except for specifically in an-Naml (the Ant). According to ash-Shafiᶜi it is an ayah of the Fatihah, and according to Ibn ᶜAbbas it is an ayah of the beginning of every surah.

Malik's argument is that which is narrated in the sound hadith that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "There has been revealed to me a surah the like of which is not in the Tawrah, the Injil, or the Qur'an." Then he said, "Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds…"[1] and he began without the Basmalah. There is also that which is mentioned in the sound hadith "Allah says, 'I have divided the salah between Me and My slave in two halves. The slave says: Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds…'"[2] and He began without the Basmalah.

Ash-Shafiᶜi's argument is that which is narrated in the hadith[3] that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to recite "In the name of Allah the Merciful the Compassionate, praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds."

The argument of Ibn ᶜAbbas is that the Basmalah is written with every surah in the mushaf.

Second: when you begin a surah recite the Basmalah, except for Surah al-Bara'ah[4]. We will mention the reason for it being dropped from al-Bara'ah in its place. If you begin to recite a part of a surah you have the choice between reciting the Basmalah or leaving it out, according to Abu ᶜAmr ad-Dani[5]. Others say to leave out the Basmalah. If you complete [one surah] and begin another then

---

[1] Narrated by Malik in a longer version on the authority of Ubayy ibn Kaᶜb. Also narrated by at-Tirmidhi, and by al-Bukhari in his *Sahih* (*Kitab at-Tafsir*).

[2] Narrated by Malik in his *al-Muwatta*, and by Muslim in his *Sahih* (*Kitab as-Salah*).

[3] Narrated by an-Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban.

[4] Surah at-Tawbah.

[5] Abu ᶜAmr ad-Dani (d. 444 AH) was the authority of his age in the sciences of the Qur'an and wrote many books on the different recitations and on technicalities of the Qur'an, amongst which the most famous is his *Kitab at-Taysir fi Qira'ah Sabᶜa*, in which he gives the authorities who passed on the various recitations of the Seven readers of

reciters differ as to reciting the Basmalah or leaving it out.

Third: the Basmalah is not recited in the prayer according to Malik, but according to ash-Shafiᶜi it is said aloud in prayers which are recited aloud and secretly in prayers in which the Qur'an is recited secretly. According to Abu Hanifah it is recited secretly in both types of prayer.

Malik's argument has two aspects: one of which is that according to him it is not an ayah of the Fatihah, as we have mentioned, and the other is that which is mentioned in the sound hadith from Anas that he said, "I prayed with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and Abu Bakr, and ᶜUmar, and ᶜUthman, and they used to begin the Fatihah with 'Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds…' not mentioning 'In the name of Allah …' at the beginning of it nor at the end of it (i.e. for beginning a surah after the Fatihah)."[1]

Ash-Shafiᶜi's argument has two aspects: one of which is that the Basmalah in his view is an ayah of the Fatihah, and the other that which is narrated in the hadith of its recitation as we have mentioned.

Fourth: they used to write "In Your name O Allah" until there was revealed "In the name of Allah [be] its sailing"[2] so they wrote "In the name of Allah" until it was revealed "…or call the All-Merciful…"[3] so they wrote "In the name of Allah the All-Merciful" until there was revealed "It is from Sulayman and it is 'In the name of Allah the Merciful the Compassionate'"[4] so they wrote that. The alif of "Bismillah" is cut off because of much usage[5].

الْبَسْمَلَةُ was revealed in the Qur'an in the ayah where Allah quotes Bilqis, the Queen of Saba, who on receiving the letter cast down to her by the Hudhud (Hoopoe) says, "It is from Sulayman and it is 'In the Name of Allah the Merciful the Compassionate …'" i.e. the letter was headed with الْبَسْمَلَةُ .

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

الْبَاءُ the [letter] ba' is: ● for the purpose of associating as well as: ● to transfer the transitive verb

---

Qur'an.

[1] Narrated by Malik in his *al-Muwatta* as well as by an-Nasa'i.

[2] Surah Hud, ayah 41.

[3] Surah al-Isra, ayah 110.

[4] Surah an-Naml, ayah 30.

[5] The orthographic denoting of the particle ب together with the noun اِسْم should be بِإِسْمِ, however the alif has been dropped due to the reason mentioned.

> (i.e. "I wrote with the pen"); ● for an oath; ● for assigning a cause; ● for accompanying ("I went with him"); ● for seeking help; ● [it is] adverbial; ● and [it is used] as an extra and superfluous word.

In the commentary he said:

> Fifth: The Ba from Bismillah. Its measure is "Beginning is 'In the name of Allah…'" and then its situation is that it is in the nominative case. According to the Kufan grammarians it is attached to a [concealed] verb which is understood as "*I begin* 'In the name of Allah…'" or "*I recite…*" so that is in the accusative. It [the verb understood] should appropriately be visualised coming at the end [of the phrase], (i.e. "In the name of Allah…" I begin or I recite) for two reasons: one of which is to convey the meaning of restriction and singling out (i.e. it is "In the name of Allah *alone* …I recite"). The other is: to bring the name of Allah forward out of respect as it was brought forward in "In the name of Allah [be] its sailing".

بِاِسْمِ or by shortening بِسْمِ – "by the name". It is usually translated in this context as "In the name…" because in English "By the name…" sounds unusual.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ it is "In the name of Allah".

The letter Ba almost means the same as 'by' in English. (The congruence of ب and 'by' is one of those little oddities which I have never seen explained. I could add أَرْض and 'Earth' {still 'ard' in Dutch}, نَبِيل and 'noble', طَال and 'tall', كَفَرَ 'he covered' and several others.)

> Sixth: Name (إِسْم) is derived from السُّمُوُّ "highness and exaltation" according to the grammarians of the school of Basra so that its last letter, the واو , is cut off. The Kufans say that it derives from السِّمَةُ which means a "sign or a mark" (its root is وَسَمَ) and its first letter, the واو, is cut off. The Basrans' argument is the diminutive (i.e. the diminutive of إِسْم is سُمَيّ) and augmentative (also, the plural is أَسْمَاءٌ) because they return words to their roots. The statement of the Kufans is more obvious with respect to the meaning because the name is a sign or a mark for the [thing] named.

اسْم – 'name' also 'noun'. Allah "taught Adam the names, all of them"[1], so we must conclude that the names of Allah are also included in 'all of them'. In Arabic 'name' and 'noun' are the same.

> Seventh: ● Your saying "Allah" is an extemporaneous substantive name and the alif and lam in it are an intrinsic part of the name and not for the purpose of making it a definite noun (i.e. not for the meaning '*The* God'). ● It has also been said that it is from التَّأَلُّهُ which means التَّعَبُّدُ "worship" or "devotion". ● It has also been said that it is from وَلْهَان (passionately in love) which

[1] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 31.

means حَيْرَةٌ (bewilderment), because intellects become bewildered about His affair. ● It has been said that it is إِلَٰه (a god – that which is worshipped), without alif and lam, from which the hamzah is removed and its vowelling transferred to the lam just as it is in الأَرْضُ (said in the Madinan pronunciation evidenced in the Qur'an recitation of Imam Nafi^c almost as *alard*) and its like, so that the two lams are united and one of them is assimilated into the other and it is given an emphatic assimilated pronunciation (تَفْخِيم i.e. the 'aw' sound as in the English word 'ball') for exaltation, unless there is a preceding kasrah ('i' vowel) before it.

The Divine Name and Dhikr

It is often stated that the Divine Name has no etymology, that it is uniquely the name of the Divine never having been employed for any other purpose, being without feminine, dual or plural. It does not need to have an etymology or a route to its meaning since Allah, exalted is He, is the meaning of His name, as the tree which stands so visibly before our senses is the meaning of the word 'tree'. There are substantial reasons therefore for not translating it by the word 'God' which is adequately translated by the Arabic word 'ilaah' for 'god' and 'al-ilaah' for 'God'.

Yet, Muslims and Arab grammarians have said some things on possible etymologies of the word, the most famous of which, and the most eagerly seized upon by orientalists and occidentalist Muslims alike, is that the Divine Name is in its origins nothing more than al-ilaah – The God – which became elided until that obtrusive i was swallowed. In this sense the Divine Name denotes the One who is ma^cbud – worshipped, adored and slaved for. Note however that Ibn Juzayy characteristically says that "it is also said", i.e. he regards it in no way as authoritative as his first statement.

Grammarians have said two other things, which take this word, Al-laah, to have the verbal root لاَهَ which may be either from ل , و and ه[1], or from ل , ي and ه[2]. The former means "He created" so that the meaning of the Divine Name would then be 'the Creator'. The latter means تَسَتَّرَ "He veiled Himself" and the famous Arabic grammarian Sibawayh[3] found it to be an acceptable etymology according to the rules of Arabic for the Divine Name. Thus, it is possible that the Divine Name could mean "The One Who Veiled Himself". Similarly the view that the Divine Name is the Greatest Name of Allah mentioned in the numerous well-known hadith[4], and that it uniquely gathers together in one name all of the meanings of the ninety-names and more, is also one to be held in respect.

---

[1] *Mukhtar al-Qamus*

[2] *Mukhtar as-Sihah* Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ibn ^cAbd al-Qadir ar-Razi.

[3] ^cAmr ibn ^cUthman ibn Qanbar as-Sibawayh (d. 180 AH) was the most renowned grammarian from the Basran school and his work *Kitab Sibawayh* is regarded by Arabic philologists as unique in its field. He died at barely thirty years of age. He is said to have had a speech impediment.

[4] See for example the *Sunan* of Abu Dawud, *Kitab al-Witr.*

Eighth: الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ are two attributes derived from الرَّحِمُ (the womb or ties of kinship) and the meaning of both of them is الإِحْسَانُ (good treatment, excellence) so that it is an attribute of action (صِفَةُ فِعْلٍ), but it has also been said that it is the will to good treatment which is an attribute of essence (صِفَةُ ذَاتٍ).

Ninth: الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ according to what has been narrated from the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is that [Allah] is الرَّحْمَن in this world and الرَّحِيمِ in the next world[1]. It has also been said that الرَّحْمَنِ is general with respect to mercy upon the believers and the disbelievers and الرَّحِيمِ is specifically for the believers, because of His words, "And He is compassionate (رَحِيم) with the believers"[2]. So الرَّحْمَنِ is more universal and more far-reaching. It has also been said that الرَّحِيمِ is more far-reaching because it comes after الرَّحْمَنِ in the manner of ascending [from the lower] to the higher.

Tenth: الرَّحْمَنِ has only been given precedence for two reasons: because it is exclusively used for Allah[3] and because of its following the course of nouns which are not attributes (i.e. which are proper names). And Allah knows best.

"In the name of Allah the Universally Merciful and the Specifically Compassionate."

---

[1] At-Tabari reported on the authority of Abu Sa^c^id al-Khudri that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said that ^c^Isa the son of Maryam used to say, "Ar-Rahman is the Merciful in this world, ar-Rahim is Compassionate in the next". *Kitab Jami^c^ al-Bayan* the tafsir of the Basmalah.

[2] Surah al-Ahzab, ayah 43.

[3] Al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan al-Basri, one of the most knowledgeable of the Followers, voiced the opinion of all the scholars of the Ummah when he said, "Ar-Rahman is a forbidden name (اِسْمٌ مَمْنُوع)", i.e. it is one of the names of Allah, like al-Khaliq (the Creator), which cannot be applied to any of His slaves.

سورة الفيل – The Elephant

This surah was revealed drawing attention to the lesson in the story of the Elephant which occurred in the year of the birth of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, because it shows the honour that Allah has for the Kaᶜbah, and His conferring blessings on the Quraysh by repelling the enemy from them. So then it was a duty that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him. In it there are, along with that, wonders of the power of Allah and of the severity of His punishment. The story is mentioned in the books of Seerah and elsewhere[1].

In brief it is that Abrahah, the king of the Abyssinians, had built a house (a cathedral) in the Yemen and wanted people to perform a pilgrimage to it as they make pilgrimage to the Kaᶜbah. A bedouin went and defecated in the house and Abrahah became angry and vowed to destroy the Kaᶜbah. He rallied his troops, mounted the elephant and set off for Makkah. When he was close to it, its people fled to the mountains and surrendered the Kaᶜbah to him, and he took two hundred camels belonging to ᶜAbd al-Muttalib. He (ᶜAbd al-Muttalib) spoke to him about them and he said to him, "How can you speak to me about the camels and you don't speak to me about the Kaᶜbah and I have come to raze it, and it is your glory and your people's glory?" ᶜAbd al-Muttalib said to him, "I am the lord of the camels, and the House has a Lord Who will protect it."

The camel knelt down at Dhu'l-Ghumays and would not go towards the Kaᶜbah. Whenever they made it face elsewhere, it would hasten [in that direction], but when they faced it in the direction of the Kaᶜbah, it stood still even though they slashed it with steel. While they were occupied with that, Allah sent black birds against them (and it has been said that they were green) every one of which had three stones, one in its beak and one in each claw. The birds pelted them with the stones, and the stones killed whomever they fell upon. It has been related that they would enter through the head and exit from the behind. Smallpox and other illnesses broke out among the rest of them, and they turned back and died on the way, dispersed and scattered on the stages of the journey and Abrahah was dis

[1] See for example Muhammad ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul Allah* edited by ᶜAbd al-Malik ibn Hisham, translated by A. Guillaumme, pp. 21-30.

أ is one of two arabic question marks, أ and هَلْ which, unlike the English question mark, are not written at the end of a sentence but spoken and written at the beginning.

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> The hamzah is ● for seeking to understand, ascertaining, ● reproval [by asking a rhetorical question], ● for making [statements] balanced, ● for the first person singular, ● for the expression of a wish, ● and as an extra and superfluous [letter] for the sake of the grammatical construction.

(أ has another function because it is sometimes the cry 'Oh', for example as in 'Oh Allah', and unlike يَا which is for calling on one far away, it is for calling on one who is near: "أَلِفُ النِّدَاء [The alif of calling or vocative alif] (T, S, * Mughnee, * K,) as in أَزَيْدُ meaning يَا زَيْدُ [O Zayd], (T, K,) and in أَزَيْدُ أَقْبِلْ [O Zayd, advance], (S) used in calling him who is near, (S, Mughnee,) to the exclusion of him who is distant, because it is abbreviated." [Lane's Lexicon] The alif hamzah followed by a second alif produces a madd, e.g. أَاللَّهُ produces آللَّهُ [O Allah].)

لَمْ 'not' and it turns a present tense verb into a past tense

أ لَمْ 'did not?'

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> (The verb) رَأَى (he saw) ● [when it is] from the seeing of the eye, it is transitive with one [object]. ● [When it is] from the seeing of the heart, with the meaning of knowledge, it is transitive and [can] take two objects.

تَرَ 'you see' but see in the sense of consider and reflect upon, not merely register it visually and in this case not see it physically at all as the events referred to occurred around the birth of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and long before our lives.

أَلَمْ تَرَ 'did not you see?'

كَيْفَ 'how'.

> أ لَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ "did you not see how?" means "did you not come to know?" and "how" is the accusative of "did (dealt) your Lord" and not of "did you not see?" and the phrase ("dealt your Lord") is governed by "did you not see?"

فَعَلَ 'He did' or 'He dealt'

رَبُّكَ 'your Lord'.

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> رَبٌّ has four meanings: ● the God, ● the Lord, ● the Owner of the thing, ● and the One who puts the matter right.

كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ 'How did or dealt your Lord.'

بِ 'with'.

أَصْحَاب 'companions', from صَحِبَ 'he accompanied' or 'he kept company with' and thus we have صَاحِب 'a companion' but also 'one having an association with' or 'one having the quality of' e.g. صَاحِبُ الْحِصَانِ the 'companion of the horse' but really the 'owner of the horse'.

أَلَمْ ‘did not’

يَجْعَلْ ‘He put’,

meaning “did not He put?” the لَمْ transforming the present tense verb يَجْعَلُ into a past tense, and truncating it into يَجْعَلْ at the same time.

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> جَعَلَ has four meanings: ● he made [it] happen, ● he cast or put off, ● he created, ● and he began to do something.

كَيْدَ ‘the plot’

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> كَيْدَ [when] from the creature is a plot. From Allah it is His willing a matter which He causes to descend upon His slave from where he does not perceive.

هُمْ ‘of them’ i.e. ‘the plot of them’

فِي ‘in’

تَضْلِيلٍ ‘error’.

> فِي تَضْلِيلٍ “in error” meaning “in frustration and loss”.

So that the ayah reads “did not He put their plot in error?” i.e. send it astray, and we will come to the root ضَلَّ ‘he strayed’ and examine it in much greater depth in the study of the Fatihah, insha’Allah.

وَأَرْسَلَ ‘and He sent’ and here Allah uses the same word that He uses for the sending of a Messenger, a رَسُول, ‘a sent one’. (It is of interest that in the ancient Arabic this very word رَسُول as well as meaning the messenger could mean the message itself, which is in harmony with the hadith of Aᶜishah, may Allah be pleased with her, that “His character was the Qur’an”[1]. It is also of interest that أَرْسَلَ has the meaning of ‘he released’ or ‘he set free’, as in the hadith of the first revelation of Qur’an, when the angel squeezed the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, until he was distressed and then released him[2]. Therefore the word مُرْسَلُونَ hints at the thought ‘the ones set free’ as well as its clearly understood meaning ‘the ones sent with a message’.)

عَلَيْهِمْ ‘on them’ ‘over them’ or ‘against them’,

طَيْرًا ‘birds’ from طَارَ ‘he flew’

> أَبَابِيلَ “flocks” meanings “groups, one after another”. Az-Zamakhshari said, “Its singular is إِبَالَة”
>
> but the majority of people say that it is a plural which has no singular from the same root.

أَبَابِيلَ ‘in flocks’ or ‘in flights’.

“And He sent against them birds in flights”.

---

[1] Related by Bayhaqi in *Kitab as-Sunan al-Kubra.*

[2] Related by al-Bukhari in his *Sahih* in the chapter *Kayfa kana bada’ al-wahy ila Rasul Allah, (salla’llahu ᶜalaihi wa sallam).*

تَرْمِيهِمْ is from

تَرْمِي 'she shooting' and the feminine singular here is the birds which, like all collections of things (normally excluding the three conscious groups, men, jinn and the angels) are treated in Arabic grammar as a feminine singular, as are indeed tribes such as the Arabs or Thamud.

بِ 'by' or 'with'

> بِحِجَارَةٍ "with stones" and it has been related that each stone was larger than a lentil but smaller than a chick-pea. Ibn ᶜAbbas said that he had found almost two basketfuls of these stones with Umm Hani' and that they had streaks of red in them. It has also been related that each stone had the name of the one upon whom it fell written on it.

مِنْ 'from' or 'of'

سِجِّيلٍ 'baked clay' such as is well known in arid desert regions and which was often used before paper for writing upon, so that this root has various words come out of it to do with records and writing.

"They, shooting them with stones of baked clay."

فَ 'so'

جَعَلَ 'He made'

هُمْ 'them'

كَ 'like'

عَصْفٍ 'leaves and stalks of corn without the grain' the root of which is عَصَفَ 'it blew violently', عَاصِفٌ indicating the kind of wind which winnows corn, separating the stalks and leaves from the grain. Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> عَصْفٌ are leaves of crops.

مَأكُولٍ 'eaten' is the past participle from أَكَلَ 'he ate'.

> كَعَصْفٍ مَأكُولٍ "like crops [which have been] eaten". الْعَصْفُ are the leaves of crops and their straw. The point is that they [the companions of the elephant] became decayed and rotten. In their being likened to it, there are three main aspects; ● First, that He likens them to straw which has been eaten by cattle and then dropped as dung and so it combines destruction and lowness, but Allah alludes euphemistically to this according to the courtesy of the Qur'an; ● Second, that He means the leaves of crops which worms and maggots have eaten; ● Third, that He means by "crops [which have been] eaten" their seeds of which nothing remains.

No more powerful image could be thought of for the total destruction of the army of the elephant. Historians paint graphic pictures of their annihilation and their slow wasting from disease and wounds as they struggled to return, fleeing, to the Yemen.

"Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant?

Did He not put their plot in loss and destruction, and He sent against them birds in flocks shooting them with stones of baked clay and so He made them like crops which have been eaten?"

سورة قريش – Quraysh

لِإِيلَافِ قُرَيْشٍ إِيلَافِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ

ل is 'for', 'for the sake of' and 'for the purpose of'.

لإِيلاَفِ "For the accustoming…," and here the word إِيلاَف – comes from the root – أَلِفَ – 'he kept to'. It rings with the sense of inhabiting, settling, occupying and accustoming. إِيلاَف is the verbal noun of the fourth form ءَالَفَ 'he united together' 'he kept [it] together' 'he accustomed'. You will have noticed it has a distinct resemblance to – أَلِف – alif the name of the first letter of the Arabic alifbata (alphabet) and to – أَلْف – alf 'a thousand' (which is considered by some to be the real root).

The next ayah makes it clear that this refers to "their being accustomed to the journey…"

إِيلاَفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ

إِيلاَفِهِمْ is 'the eelaaf of them'. Because 'journey' رِحْلَةَ ends with the فَتْحَة it is being treated as an object by the verbal noun إِيلاَف as if it were a verb.

i.e. "For the accustoming of Quraysh, their being accustomed to the journey of the …"

الشِّتَاءِ "… the winter"

وَالصَّيْفِ "…and the summer".

> "For the accustoming of Quraysh, their being accustomed to the journey of the winter and the summer". Quraysh are a section of the Arabs of the Hijaz who are descended from Ma[c]d ibn [c]Adnan but the name Qurayshi is only used for the descendants of an-Nadr ibn Kinanah and they are divided into clans and houses such as Bani Hashim, Bani Umayyah, Bani Makhzum and others. The tribe was named Quraysh because of their تَقَرُّش i.e. their earning; they were traders.
>
> [It is narrated] from Mu[c]awiyyah that he asked Ibn [c]Abbas, "Why were Quraysh called Quraysh?" He said, "Because of a beast (قِرْش a shark) in the ocean which eats and is not eaten and it overcomes and is not overcome."
>
> They were resident in Makkah and had two journeys every year for trade, a journey in the winter to the Yemen and a journey in the summer to ash-Sham (present-day Palestine, Syria and Lebanon). It has also been said that both journeys were to ash-Sham, and it has been said that they used to journey in summer to at-Ta'if where there was water and shade, and they would reside there, and that they would journey in winter to Makkah for their residence there.
>
> [If] you said آلَفْتُ الْمَكَانَ "I kept to the place and became a ccustomed to it", الإِيلاَفِ would be the verbal noun from that when you became accustomed to it. [It is also] said that [if] you said,

أَلِفَ الرَّجُلُ الشَّيْءَ it would mean that he was made accustomed to it and nothing else.

According to the former, [themselves] Quraysh kept to the jouneying of winter and summer, and, according to the latter, [it was] Allah [Who] kept them to the two journeys [or accustomed them to the two journeys]. There are different views as to what His words "For the accustoming of Quraysh…" connect to, and there are three positions on that: ● One is that they connect with His words, "so let them worship…" and so the meaning is, "let them worship Allah because of their being kept to the two journeys because that is a blessing of Allah upon them"; ● The second is that they connect to a word that is unstated but understood, "Be amazed! or Wonder! at the accustoming of Quraysh…"; ● The third is that it connects to Surah al-Fil meaning that Allah destroyed the companions of the Elephant "for the accustoming of Quraysh" so that it connects to His word "so He made them [like crops eaten, for the accustoming of Quraysh…]" or with those actions which are before it (i.e. the sending of the birds with stones of baked clay). What supports this view is that the two surahs were one surah in the mushaf of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb without any separation between them[1] and that ʿUmar recited themboth in one rakʿah of Maghrib.

Allah mentioned the "accustoming" first unspecifically and generally, then He substituted for it the

---

[1] The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, received the Qur'an by revelation and transmitted it to his Companions both orally and by calling scribes and dictating it to them. Yet the Companions never gathered it together as a book until in the Khilafah of Abu Bakr when so many of those who had memorized it were killed in one famous battle that there was a genuine fear that some of Qur'an would be lost. So Qur'an was gathered as a text, as a book, the recitation was collected together as a book. It remained as a manuscript only until the Khilafah of Sayyiduna ʿUthman, when, because of the confusions caused by the spread of Islam among Bedouins and non-Arabs and the possibilities of corruption of the text of Qur'an, Sayyiduna ʿUthman had it published, sending a number of copies to the main centres of the time such as Damascus, Basra, etc., from which people made copies for their own use, and it is from that the single text which all of the Muslims use derives. Then in obedience to his command the other Companions destroyed their own attempts to compile the Qur'an, even Sayyiduna ʿAli who had recorded the ayat in the chronological order of their revelation. It was this voluntary compliance with the command of the Khalifah that gave his action the weight of being a consensus (ijmaʿ), so that the text we have is the consensus of the Companions. Yet knowledge of the details in which the Companions had differed before this consensus is also a source of knowledge richly drawn on in the tafsir literature as in the case cited above.

"accustoming" specifically to the two journeys in order to exalt the importance of the affair. The "journey" is accusative because it is the object of "their accustoming". He said "journey" (using the singular) and He meant "two journeys" and that is like the words of the poet:

> "Eat all of you in part of your stomach and you will be healthy." (The stomach is singular although "all of you", the masculine plural, are addressed.)

And Quraysh? An aristocracy from the prophetic line of Isma[c]il the son of Ibrahim, peace be on both of them, themselves intermarried into the Arabs. Both lines are descendants of Sam the son of Nuh, peace be upon him, and so samitic. The Arabs know Quraysh as – عَرَبٌ مُسْتَعْرِبَة – meaning arabised Arabs.

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا

فَ is 'so' and also 'then', in the sense of 'immediately', where ثُمَّ means 'then later' or 'moreover'. Here فَ is 'so' and thus, according to one of the accepted interpretations it means "because of the blessing of their being kept to the winter and summer caravans so …"

فَلْ and here the ل is a particle which when used with the present tense of a verb has the sense of indirect command 'let them …' and it truncates the present tense verb from يَعْبُدُونَ 'they worship' to the jussive يَعْبُدُوا 'let them worship!'.

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا "so let them worship".

"So let them worship the Lord of this house": This is establishing the argument against them with graciousness and trying to call on them and to remind them of blessings. The "house" is the Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Haram).

رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ

رَبَّ 'the Lord'

هَذَا '[of] this'

الْبَيْتِ 'the House' the Ka[c]bah.

And بَيْت is derived from بَاتَ 'he passed the night' and 'house' is thus derived from one of its verbal nouns بَيْتًا meaning 'passing the night', particularly meaning the spending of the night without sleeping.

الذي 'the One Who',

أَطْعَمَهُمْ 'He fed them' – from the root طَعِمَ 'he tasted' or 'he ate' and طَعَامٌ 'food'. أَطْعَمَ is the fourth form of the verb[1] meaning 'he gave to taste' or 'he gave to eat'.

"The One Who fed them…"

---

[1]Arabic has three basic tenses, فَعَلَ "he did" has as present tense يَفْعَلُ "he is doing" and as command افْعَلْ "do!", before the plethora of compound tenses and modified tenses such as كَانَ يَفْعَلُ "he used to do", إِنْ يَفْعَلْ "if he does", أَنْ يَفْعَلَ "that he does".

Beyond that, the basic verb, e.g. فَعَلَ, has the potential to generate more than ten other forms each of which will have its tenses with their conjugations.

مِن جُوعٍ ‘from hunger’.

> “The One Who fed them against hunger” it may mean their being fed by means of the two journeys, because it is related that before that they were in a very severe and constricted condition, so much so that they even ate corpses. It may also be that He means their being fed generally, because the people of Makkah were living in a valley without cultivation and yet Allah fed them from that which He brought to them from the lands through the supplication of their father Ibrahim, peace be upon him, in his words “and provide for them of fruits”[1].

He fed them, among other ways, by means of this caravan trade, living as they did in one of the most inhospitable places on the planet. That is a kind of miracle. The general everyday miracle is that we are, and Quraysh were, provided for and fed by apparently unmiraculous means; the miraculous nature of the unmiraculous everyday provision of our lives.

وَءَامَنَهُمْ

ءَامَنَ ‘he made secure, safe’.

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> ءَامَنَ إِيمَانًا (the latter is its verbal noun) [means] he affirmed. ● إِيمَان in linguistic use is absolute affirmation, ● and in the shariᶜah it is the affirmation of Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day. ● الْمُومِنُ in the shariᶜah is the one who affirms these matters. ● الْمُومِنُ the name of Allah, exalted is He, means The One Who Affirms Himself, and it has been said that it is from security (الأَمْنُ) means the One Who Gives Security to His Close Friends From His Punishment. ● أَمِنَ, with the short hamzah (i.e. without maddah) and with a kasrah on the meem, أَمْنًا أَمَانَةً (i.e. its two verbal nouns) is the opposite of fear.

مِنْ خَوْفٍ ‘from fear’

> “And He made them safe from fear”: it is possible that He means that He made them safe from the fear of the companions of the elephant, and it is possible that He means that He made them safe in their city through the supplication of Ibrahim in His words, “My Lord, make this a safe city”[2] which we have explained in its place. Or He may mean that He made them safe in their journeys because they were secure in their travels and no-one would show them any evil, whereas others’ properties and lives would be taken. It is also said that He made them safe from leprosy for no leper

---

The second form is فَعَّلَ with the middle letter doubled e.g. عَلَّمَ “he taught” a second form verb derived from a first form عَلِمَ “he learnt” or “he knew”. Similarly we have III فَاعَلَ and IV أَفْعَلَ etc.

[1] Surah Ibrahim, ayah 97.

[2] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 126.

was ever seen in Makkah. Az-Zamakhshari said, "The use of the indefinite form for 'hunger' and 'fear' is because of the severity of the two of them."

"And He gave them safety from fear". He, the invisible unseen One, appointed Makkah a haram, a sacred area where fighting is prohibited. Quraysh were safe in an age when brigandage was almost the entire way of life of the desert Arabs. That protection is said to have extended to the caravans, for Quraysh had only to say, "We are the people of the haram," for them to be allowed to go in peace, such was the respect that the Arabs had for the haram. That awe and respect had only been redoubled by the events of the Army of the Elephant.

"For the accustoming of Quraysh, [for] their being made accustomed to the journey of winter and summer. So let them worship the Lord of this House, Who fed them against hunger and made them safe from fear."

سورة الماعون – Zakah or Small Kindnesses

أَ is one of the two Arabic question marks.

رَآيْتَ in the Warsh recitation and رَأَيْتَ in the Hafs, both meaning 'you saw'. Remember that from the same root are derived words to do with dreaming, i.e. seeing during sleep. And a masculine singular being is addressed.

'Did you see?'

الذي 'the one who'

يُكَذِّبُ 'he calls a lie, makes another a liar', and so 'denies'. This is the second form of the verb كَذِبَ 'he lied'.

يُكَذِّبُ بِ 'he denies'

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> الدِّين has five meanings, ● the millah (i.e. the total life transaction of Islam), ● custom (habit), ● recompense, ● reckoning, ● and overwhelming.
>
> "Have you seen the one who denies the deen?": it is said that this was revealed about Abu Jahl and Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, and it is [also] said that it is general. The deen here is the way of belief and practice (millah), or the recompense [on the Day of Reckoning].

فَ 'so' 'for'

ذَلِكَ 'that'

الذي '[is] the one who'

يَدُعُّ 'he repulses' or 'pushes away violently'

> "For that is the one who repulses the orphan" i.e. he pushes him away with violence, ● possibly away from his food, ● or away from good treatment towards him, ● or [lastly] from his property and his rights, which is more serious.

الْيَتِيمَ 'the fatherless one' often translated as 'orphan', but meaning specifically one who has lost his father, there being other words to denote one who has lost his mother or both parents. "He repulses the fatherless one," and in the shariᶜah this action may include in its limits the act of depriving the fatherless child of his inheritance, a particularly cowardly act in the absence of a strong male to stand up for the child and one of the major wrong actions which are almost guaranteed to enter one in the Fire[1]. It can be extended to mean any bad behaviour or ungenerosity towards an orphan who is in need.

وَلاَ 'and not'

---

[1] Allah, exalted is He, says in Surah al-Anᶜam, ayah 152, **"Approach not the orphan's property except in exchange for that which is better."** Also in Surah an-Nisa, ayah 10, **"Indeed those that eat the property of orphans wrongfully are but consuming within their bellies a fire, and they shall roast in a blaze."**

يَحُضُّ ‘he urges’

i.e. ‘and [who] does not urge’

عَلَى ‘on’

‘and [who] does not urge’

طَعَامِ ‘feeding’ the verbal noun, which in everyday Arabic is ‘food’.

الْمِسْكِين ‘the bereft one’ as opposed to the الْفَقِير ‘the needy one’. It is from the root سَكَنَ ‘he was still’ or ‘he dwelt’. There are various definitions in sharīʿah of the above two words which cover different dimensions of poverty as understood by Muslims. It is usually admitted that الْمِسْكِين is in a more difficult situation than the الْفَقِير.

> The one who “does not urge on the feeding of the bereft one” will not [himself] feed him in the first place. This phrase is the response to “have you seen?” because its meaning is “tell me”, so that it is as if it were a question and answer. The meaning is “look at the one who denies the deen and you will find in him these ugly qualities of character and [these] evil actions.” That is because the deen will carry its people to doing good actions and abandoning wrong actions. So the purpose of the words is to censure the disbelievers and their conditions.

So far the ayat are generally held to be Makkan, the following ayat possibly being Madinan. The surah moves from this glance at a kafir and his values to a rebuke for hypocritical behaviour from Muslims. “So woe to those who pray, the ones who of their prayers are neglectful …”

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> وَيْلٌ is a word of evil. It has been said that الْوَيْلُ is a valley in Jahannam.

‘Woe’ here is an attempt to translate the untranslatable وَيْلٌ. Naturally it is unthinkable that it should be for those who pray and indeed it is forbidden to pause at this point in the recitation until one has recited the following ayat which qualify the meaning, “…the ones who of their prayers are neglectful…”. The word used here عَنْ has the sense of neglecting to do their prayers whereas فِي – ‘in’ would have conveyed the sense of someone who was distracted within the prayer itself.

فَوَيْلٌ ‘so woe’

لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ‘to those who make salah’

الذِينَ ‘the ones who’ plural of الذِي

هُمْ ‘they’

عَنْ ‘from’ or ‘away from’

صَلاَتِهِمْ ‘their salah’

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> صَلَوة if it is from Allah, then its meaning is mercy. If it is from the creature, then it is has two meanings: supplication, and the well-known actions.

سَاهُونَ ‘neglectful ones’ ‘forgetful ones’,

"So woe to the ones who pray, the ones who of their prayers are neglectful". ● It is said that this was revealed about ᶜAbdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul the hypocrite, and so a half of the surah, according to this, is Makkan and another half is Madani, which Abu Zaid as-Suhayli said. That is because Abu Jahl and other disbelievers are most often mentioned in Makkan surahs, and neglectfulness of prayer, whereas showing off in it are characteristics of those [munafiqun] who were in Madinah particularly according to those people who say that it is about ᶜAbdullah ibn Ubayy. ● It has been said that it is all Makkan and that is the most well known position, and according to this position, the last portion was revealed about a man who became a Muslim in Makkah but was not sound and authentic in his iman. ● It has been said that it is all Madani.

Neglectfulness (sahw) of prayer is abandoning it or delaying it from its time out of indifference to it. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was asked about "the ones who of their prayers are neglectful" and he said, "The ones who delay it out of its time." ᶜAta ibn Yasar said, "Praise belongs to Allah Who said, 'From their prayers' and He did not say, 'In their prayers'."

Shaykh Ahmad Ibn ᶜAta'illah[1], in his book the Hikam, said, "Do not leave off remembrance because of failure to be present with Allah in it, because your forgetfulness of the remembrance is more serious than your forgetfulness in the remembrance, because perhaps He will raise you from a remembrance with forgetfulness to a remembrance with wakefulness, and from a remembrance with wakefulness to a remembrance with presence and from a remembrance with presence to a remembrance with withdrawal from everything other than the Remembered One."

Let us take this thought and look at سَاهُونَ, what it is that makes the Lord of the Universe say, "So woe to those who pray, the ones who are سَاهُونَ from their prayers…"

الذِينَ 'the ones who'

هُمْ 'they'

يُرَآؤُونَ 'they show off' and this is from the third form of the very verb we began with رَأَى 'he saw'. So this third form رَاءَى means 'he acted in order to be seen'. It is show, and it is an element of hypocrisy. It has degrees, the worst of which is a performance only for the sake of being seen – this is absolute hypocrisy. نِفَاق

[1] Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn ᶜAta'illah al-Iskandari (d. 709 AH) was recognised as the greatest scholar of his age, encompassing all the Islamic sciences. He gave lectures on grammar, hadith, tafsir and was the Shaykh of the Shadhili Tariqah, and an expert on Maliki and Shafiᶜi fiqh. He is best remembered for his *al-Hikam* in which he uses the full weight and subtlety of the Arabic language to convey the states and sciences of Tasawwuf in its most pristine form.

'hypocrisy' and مُنَافِق 'hypocrite' are words not to be used lightly as they are words which indicate degrees more serious than kufr. It is the condition of the person who, for his own position in society or some personal or political goal, pretends to be a Muslim. Show in this sense is a form of shirk, idolatry or ascribing partners to Allah.

"The ones who show off" is from الرِّيَاءُ (showing off or acting so as to be seen) i.e. their prayer is showing off to people and is not for Allah.

"So woe to those who make salah, the ones who of their salah are neglectful, the ones who show-off…"

وَ and

يَمْنَعُونَ 'they prevent, forbid or refuse'

الْمَاعُونَ 'household stuff, whatever is of common and necessary use.'

"And they refuse the zakat (or small kindnesses)". He described them as being mean and of little benefit to people. About the term al-ma^cun there are four statements: ● The first is that it is the zakah; ● The second, that it [means] property and wealth in the dialect of Quraysh; ● The third is that it is water; ● The fourth is that it is that which people give to one another and [share] among themselves, such as receptacles and utensils, an axe, a bucket for the well and scissors. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was asked, "What thing is it not permitted to refuse?" So he said, "Water, fire and salt," and he added in some versions "The [sewing] needle and yeast."

Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ar-Razi said, "الْمَاعُون is also obedience."[1] The grammarian Abu ᶜUbaidah said, "الْمَاعُون in the age of ignorance [before Islam] was every useful [thing] and gift. In Islam it is obedience and zakah."[2]

"Have you considered the one who denies the life transaction for that is the one who repulses the fatherless orphan and does not urge the feeding of the needy.

So woe to the ones who pray, who of their prayer are neglectful, the ones who make display and refuse the zakah (or small kindnesses)."

[1] *Mukhtar as-Sihah*, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ibn ᶜAbd al-Qadir ar-Razi (d. 666 AH).

[2] Ibid.

سورة الكوثر – Abundance

إِنَّا is composed of

إِنَّ which has the sort of emphasis that 'truly, really, verily' have, and

نَا 'we' or in this case 'We' for the Divine. Arabic has no capital letters, so we are translating here into English conventions.

أَعْطَيْنَاكَ from the root عَطَى 'he took in his hand' and so we have عَطَاء 'a gift' and then the fourth form is أَعْطَى 'he gave' and then أَعْطَيْنَا 'We gave' and thus 'We gave you'.

> "Truly We, We gave you al-Kawthar" and this is an address to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Al-Kawthar with ث [means] an exaggeration of abundance and there are seven statements in explanation of it: ● First that it is the basin (حَوْض) of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; ● Second, that it is the much good which Allah gave him in the world and in the hereafter, [which is what] Ibn ᶜAbbas said, and Saᶜid ibn Jubayr[1] agreed with him in that[2]. If it is said that the river which is in the Garden is a part of the good which Allah has given him then the meaning is that it is general. ● Third, that it is the Qur'an; ● Fourth, that it is the abundance of companions and followers; ● Fifth, that it is tawhid; ● Sixth, that it is intercession (الشَّفَاعَةُ); ● Seventh, that it is the light which Allah put in his heart.
>
> There is no doubt that Allah gave him all of these things, however, the authentic position is that what is meant by al-Kawthar is the basin because of what is related in sound hadith that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Do you grasp what al-Kawthar is? It is a river which Allah has given me and it is the basin whose [drinking] receptacles are as the number of stars in the sky."[3]

فَصَلِّ

فَ 'so', 'then'

---

[1] Saᶜid ibn Jubayr (d. 95 AH) was, along with Mujahid ibn Jabr (d. 104 AH) and ᶜAta' ibn Abi Rabah (d. 114 AH), one of the main students of Ibn ᶜAbbas, may Allah be pleased with him. Together they formed what was later known as the Makkan School of Tafsir, based on the teaching of the illustrious Companions.

[2] Related by al-Bukhari in his *Sahih* in the *Kitab at-Tafsir*.

[3] The middle section of a hadith related by Muslim on the authority of Anas ibn Malik in the *Kitab as-Salah*. Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i also related it.

صَلِّ ‘make salah’.

لِرَبِّكَ

لِ ‘for’ or ‘for the sake of’,

رَبِّ Lord.

كَ ‘your’,

رَبِّكَ ‘your Lord’.

“So make salah for your Lord”

وَانْحَرْ

وَ ‘and’

انْحَرْ ‘sacrifice!’.

“Then pray to your Lord and sacrifice”. Concerning this there are five statements: ● The first is that He ordered him with the prayer in general and with the sacrifice of sacrificial animals (e.g. at Hajj); ● Second, that he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to sacrifice before the prayer of the [c]Eid, so He commanded him to pray and then later sacrifice, so that the intention according to this is to delay the sacrifice until after the prayer; ● Third, that the disbelievers prayed, clapping hands and whistling and they sacrificed to idols, so Allah said to His prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, “Pray to your Lord alone and sacrifice for Him, i.e. for His face not for any other than Him”, so that according to this it is an order to have tawhid and true sincerity; ● Fourth, that the meaning of انْحَرْ is “place your right hand over the left upon your chest in the prayer” so, according to this, it is from النَّحْرُ which means the chest[1]; ● Fifth, that its meaning is

---

[1] Ad-Daraqutni related this tafsir from [c]Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him. Al-Qurtubi said in his *Jami[c] Ahkam al-Qur'an* ”Our scholars have disagreed on this matter and there are three views on it:

Firstly that you do not place the hands on the chest either in the obligatory or supererogatory prayers, and so it is not permitted in the obligatory and not recommended in the supererogatory prayers.

Secondly, that it is not done in the obligatory prayers but [can be] done in the supererogatory prayers [as a means of] seeking help (i.e. of buttressing and supporting oneself in the prayer) in which case it is a *rukhsah* (a concession).

Thirdly, that it is done in both the obligatory and supererogatory prayers.

The **second** position is that which was stated by al-Layth ibn Sa[c]d of Egypt and Malik, and recognised by Al-Awza[c]i of Syria, while the **third** position is that of ash-Shafi[c]i and his companions, and also that of Kufah, which

"raise your hands to your chest in opening the prayer."

إِنَّ 'truly'

شَانِئَكَ 'your hater' or 'the one who hates you' and شَانِئ is 'one who hates'. The haters of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, exulted in his having no boy children, none to carry on his project[1].

هُوَ الأَبْتَرُ

هُوَ 'he' is

الأَبْتَرُ 'childless' from بَتَرَ 'he cut off [the tail]' so that بَتِير is on the form of فَعِيل, here with the meaning of a مَفْعُول passive participle meaning 'one [whose tail is] cut off' and الأَبْتَرُ is the superlative of that, meaning 'the most cut off' and so the 'childless' or strictly speaking in this case the 'sonless'.

"Truly, the one who hates you, he is the one who is most cut off." الشَّانِئُ is the "one who hates" and it comes from الشَّنَآنُ which means enmity, and this ayah was revealed about al-ᶜAs ibn Wa'il, and it has been said [that it is] about Abu Jahl, in the way of a riposte to him when he said, "Muhammad is cut off," meaning, he has no son, "so that when he dies we will be free of him, and his affair will cease with his death". So Allah informs [us] that this disbeliever is the one who is cut off, even though he had sons, because he is cut off from the mercy of Allah, and because he, whenever he is mentioned, is mentioned with curses as opposed to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, whose mention and remembrance is forever until the end of time raised upon mimbars and minarets coupled with the mention and remembrance of Allah[2], and that the believers from his age until the Day of Resurrection are his followers so that he is as if he were their father.

---

includes Abu Hanifah and Abu Yusuf.

[1] Allah, exalted is He, says in Surah al-Ahzab, "Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but rather he is the Messenger of Allah and the *Seal of the Prophets*. And Allah is of all things knowledgeable." By this Allah also destroyed the claim of anyone after the death of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to prophethood on the basis of male descent from him. This indicated the end of prophecy (except for the dream of the believer which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said was a forty-sixth part of prophecy. See Muslim, *Kitab ar-Ru'ya*) by linking his, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, not having male offspring and the fact that he is the Seal of the Prophets. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "There is no prophet after me; I am the Seal of the Prophets."

[2] This is the meaning of His words, exalted is He, in Surah al-Inshirah, ayah 4, "**And have We not raised up your remembrance?**"

“Truly We, We gave you al-Kawthar, so pray to your Lord and sacrifice.

Truly the one who hates you, he is the most cut off.”

سورة الكافرون

The Ones Who Cover Over

> The cause of [the revelation of] this surah was that some people from the Quraysh, of whom were al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, Umayyah ibn Khalf, al-ᶜAs ibn Wa'il, Abu Jahl and their like, said, "O Muhammad, follow our deen and we will follow yours. Worship our gods for a year and we will worship your god for a year." So he said, "[We seek] refuge with Allah that we should associate anything as partner with Allah," and the surah was revealed with the meaning of a declaration of disavowal of their gods. For that reason the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Whoever recited it has certainly disavowed shirk."

'Say, "Oh you kafirun,"' begins one of the four surahs that start with قُلْ 'say', the command to a singular being to speak to people the words following or the meanings which follow.

قُلْ 'say' is from قَالَ 'he said'.

يَـأَيُّـهَـا 'O ye' (i.e. the plural of 'you'). يَا is the vocative, 'O', addressed to one who is remote, far away and distant. Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> كَافر has two meanings: ● [Firstly] from الْكُفْرُ which is denial. ● And [secondly] from cultivation, an example of which is, "Its growth amazes the كُفَّارُ"[1] i.e. the cultivators.

As for these people – الْكَافِـرُونَ – who are known variously as unbelievers, disbelievers or unfaithful, by a wonderful agreement with the English language كَـفَـرَ means 'he covered' and it was originally used for the farmer who threw seeds on the earth and then kafared them over.

لاَ 'not'

أَعْـبُـدُ 'I adore/worship' and عَـبْـدٌ 'slave' is from this root. And people become the slaves of what they adore. We say in English 'she enthralled him' meaning she fascinated him, but this comes from the old word 'thrall' which means a slave, so that the sentence means 'she enslaved him'. The reverse is also true, that whatever one is a slave to is one's god or object of adoration and worship.

"I do not worship"

مَا 'what'

تَـعْبُدُونَ 'you adore/worship'.

"I do not slave for or worship or adore what you slave for or worship or adore," and we will look in great detail at some of the set of terms springing from the root of عَبَدَ in Arabic in our look at Surat al-Fatihah.

The Arabic language, particularly in recitation of Qur'an, abounds in traps which are yet highly significant. One trap is that the word لاَ means 'not' or 'no', whereas the particle لَ means 'definitely'. If one recites this

---

[1] Surah Hadid, ayah 20.

ayah with لأَعْبُدُ instead of لاَ أَعْبُدُ it means 'I definitely worship/adore [what you worship/adore]' Indeed, the rules of recitation demand a maddah here, i.e. that one recites with extra length لاَ أَعْبُدُ "laaaaaa ᶜabudu …", so that if one does that, it is unequivocally "I do not worship what you worship."

وَلاَ 'and not'

أَنْتُمْ 'you'

'and you are not'

عَابِدُونَ 'worshippers' but here 'worshipping'

مَا 'what'

أَعْبُدُ 'I adore/worship'.

"And you are not worshipping what I worship."

وَلاَ 'and not'

أَنَا 'I'

'and I am not'

عَابِدٌ 'a worshipper'

'and I do not worship'

مَا 'what'

عَبَدتُمْ 'you (pl.) worshipped' or 'you worship'

"And I do not worship what you worship"

وَلاَ 'and not'

أَنْتُمْ 'you'

'and you are not'

عَابِدُونَ 'worshippers' here 'worshipping'

مَا 'what'

أَعْبُدُ 'I adore/worship'.

"and you are not worshipping what I worship."

لاَ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ "I do not worship what you worship". This informs that he does not worship their idols. If it is said, "Why does he repeat this meaning by saying وَلاَ أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ ?" the answer has two aspects: ● One of which is that of az-Zamakhshari who said, "His statement لاَ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ means in the future (i.e. 'I *will* not worship what you are all worshipping') and by His statement, وَلاَ أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ He means in the past i.e. 'I have never worshipped what you all worshipped so how can you seek that from me now?'" ● The second [opinion] is what Ibn ᶜAtiyyah said, "His words لاَ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ can be taken to mean the present time in particular,whereas His saying وَلاَ أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ "I do not worship what you all worship" means "never as

long as I live' because the لاَ of negation when it prefixes the present tense verb makes it purely for the future tense."

By His word لاَ أَعْبُدُ ..., [the word] لاَ can be [taken to] mean in the present [tense] but for me it is [also equally] possible that His words لاَ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ can mean in the future because of how لاَ can have this future meaning.Then His words وَلاَ أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ would mean in the present moment. Thus we get from the total the refutation of his worshipping idols in the future to the meaning of the present in His words وَلاَ أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ [which] is moreover then more apparent than the meaning of the past (i.e. "I do not worship what you worship" rather than "I have never worshipped what you worship") which was what az-Zamakhshari had said. A part of the meaning of the future is the saying, مَا زَيْدٌ بِقَائِمٍ – "Zayd will not stand": by the negation of the nominal sentence it requires the present tense.

وَلاَ أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ This informs that these kuffar will not worship Allah as it was said to Nuh, peace be upon him, "That no-one will believe of your people except for someone who has already believed"1. But this is with respect to a particular group of people who died as kuffar. It has been narrated that the above-mentioned group were Abu Jahl, al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, al-ᶜAsi ibn Wa'il, al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib, Umayyah ibn Khalf, Ubayy ibn Khalf and Ibn al-Hajjaj all of whom died as kuffar.

If it is said, "Why does He repeat this meaning and words and say after that وَلاَ أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ another time?" There are two aspects to the answer: ● One is the word of az-Zamakhshari that the first [use of this ayah] is in the future and the second is the past. ● The other opinion is that of Ibn ᶜAtiyyah that the first is in the present and the second is in the future, i.e. that they will never ever believe.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ "To you your deen and to me my deen." meaning "To you your shirk and to me my tawhid", and this is a declaration of freedom (بَرَاءَة) from them and in it there was a sort of granting them safety which was abrogated by [the ayat of] the sword[2].

---

[1] Surah Hud, ayah 36.

[2] Surah Muhammad, ayah 4. See *The Sign of the Sword* by Shaykh ᶜAbd-alqadir al-Murabit for the most complete exposition of the traditional fiqh judgements deriving from this ayah. This work is doubly invaluable since it

"Say, 'O you who cover over [the truth], I will not worship what you worship and you will not worship what I worship.

And I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship.

To you your life-transaction and to me my llife-transaction.'"

---

locates fiqh clearly in our actual situation today.

سورة النصر – Help

> ᶜUmar ibn al-Khattab asked a group of the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, about the meaning of this surah, and so they said, "Allah ordered the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to glorify and seek forgiveness at the time of help and victory." That is the apparent meaning of the words, so he said to Ibn ᶜAbbas in their presence, "ᶜAbdullah, what do you say?" He said, "It is the appointed term[1] of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, which Allah informed him would be close when he saw help and victory." ᶜUmar said, "I only know about it the same as you know." Ibn Masᶜud and others said the same, and the words of ᶜAishah, may Allah be pleased with her, support it, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when he conquered Makkah and the Arabs accepted Islam, began to say very much, 'Glory be to you O Allah and with Your praise, O Allah I seek Your forgiveness,' interpreting the Qur'an thus (i.e. this surah)." And he said to her once, "I only see it as the approach of my term." Ibn ᶜUmar said, "This surah was revealed at Mina on the days of tashriq [of the ᶜEid of Hajj] during the Farewell Hajj and the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, lived eighty days or so after it. Ibn Masᶜud said, "This surah is called Surah at-Tawdiᶜ (the surah of leavetaking)."

The context of the hadith was that the older Companions were surprised at the Khalifah seeking counsel from a young man like Ibn ᶜAbbas. ᶜUmar then asked Ibn ᶜAbbas the question, to which he knew the answer, to illustrate ᶜAbdullah's knowledge.

إِذَا is an adverb of past time (i.e. 'when').

جَاءَ 'came'.

'When came,' Arabic has an unusual syntax when compared to many Indo-European languages (Gaelic excluded) in that you can start a sentence with the verb and then proceed to the subject.

نَصْرُ "help"

نَصْرُ اللَّه "the help of Allah"

وَالْفَتْحُ "and the victory"

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> الْفَتْحُ has two meanings: ● the opening of the doors, from which there comes the "opening of the lands" (i.e. the conquest) and the like of that; ● and judgement, for example, "Judge between us

[1] i.e. his passing away, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

and our people."

And the judge has been called فَـاتِـحً. The name of Allah, الْفَـتَّـاحُ is said to be "The Ruler" (or "Judge"), and it is also said to mean the Creator of Help and Victory.

And in his commentary:

"When there comes the help of Allah and the victory" meaning by the *fath* (victory) the conquest of Makah and at-Ta'if and other cities which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, conquered. Ibn ᶜAbbas said, "Truly, the help was the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah[1] and the victory was the conquest of Makkah." And it has [also] been said, "The help was the acceptance of Islam by the people of Yemen", and the informing of all that [in this surah] was before it happened, it was an informing of something unseen and thus is one of the clear signs of prophethood.

وَرَأَيْتَ 'and you saw'

النَّاسَ 'mankind'

يَدْخُلُونَ 'they entering'

فِي 'in'

دِينِ اللَّهِ 'the deen of Allah'

Deen

This is the word, the five meanings of which Ibn Juzayy gives, but which in the sense of الْمِلَّةُ often appears in English as 'religion', a word which we prefer to translate it as 'life-transaction' because of its derivations from the word for a debt – دَيْنٌ. It is bound up with the debt that we owe the Creator for His creating and sustaining us and placing us on the earth. There is the debt owed to parents and society at large too for

[1] The treaty that took place between the Muslims and the Quraysh in the sixth year of the Hijrah. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, with around 1,300 companions left Madinah in order to perform the ᶜUmrah, but stopped short of Makkah and instead camped in Hudaybiyyah – a well north-west of Makkah. The Prophet expressed his desire to perform ᶜUmrah by sending ᶜUthman ibn ᶜAffan to the Quraysh as an ambassador with the message that their purpose was peaceful. The Quraysh, however, detained him thereby delaying his return and the Muslims thought that he had been killed. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, then called on his companions to renew their allegiance to him, fearing that all was not well. However, ᶜUthman arrived back in safety. It was then that the peace treaty was negotiated giving a ten years cessation in hostilities and granting the freedom to both sides to enter into agreements and to bond with any tribe. The truce was established on the condition that the Muslims would not enter Makkah until the following year and that they would return any Muslims who fled from the Quraysh back to them. Despite what seemed a one-sided treaty in favour of the Quraysh, Allah confirmed the treaty thus, **"Indeed, We have granted you a clear victory…"** (Surah al-Fath, ayah 1) which was later to be proved true.

nurture and upbringing.

أَفْوَاجًا '[in] throngs'.

> "And you see people entering into the deen of Allah in throngs" i.e. in groups, and that is because after the conquest of Makkah many people entered Islam. It has been narrated that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had with him at the conquest of Makkah ten thousand [companions] and that he had with him on the raid of Tabuk seventy thousand. Abu ᶜUmar ibn ᶜAbd al-Barr[1] said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, did not die while there was a disbelieving man [left] among the Arabs." It is said that at his death the number of the Muslims was one hundred and fourteen thousand.

فَسَبِّحْ "So glorify"

The root here is سَبَحَ 'he floated or swam' whose second form is سَبَّحَ 'he glorified' and it has the meaning of "purifying Him of what is not fitting or appropriate to Him of forms, images, concepts, descriptions, etc.," and as the learned of our community have said, everything that occurs to your mind of forms, images, concepts and thoughts, then you must know that He is other than that[2].

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms about a word from the same root:

> سُبْحَانَ i.e. purification, and سُبْحَانَ اللَّه i.e. you have purified Him of what is not fitting for Him of: female companion, child, partners, equals, and the attributes of being originated, and all defects and shortcomings.

بِحَمْدِ 'With praise [of]'

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> حَمْدٌ is praise whether it is a response to His blessings or spontaneous. الشُّكْرُ is only a response. In this respect الْحَمْدُ is more general. الشُّكْرُ is with the tongue, the heart and the limbs, and الْحَمْدُ is only with the tongue, so that الشُّكْرُ is in this respect more general.

رَبِّكَ 'Your Lord'

وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ "And seek His forgiveness".

This derives from the root غَفَرَ meaning 'He forgave' but really in the depths of its original meaning having the sense of 'he covered' (and in this approaching the root meaning of كَفَرَ with which it shares two letters). So that this word does not truly have the meaning of fogiveness, that sense being more represented by عَفَا 'he pardoned or forgave'. غَفَرَ means more accurately 'he covered' the slave's wrong action so that the slave

---

[1] Abu ᶜUmar ibn ᶜAbd al-Barr (d. 463 AH) was known as the 'Hadith Master of the West'. He was born in Cordoba (Spain) and was an authority in every science of Islam.

[2] Allah, exalted is He, says, in Surah ash-Shura, ayah 11, **"And there is nothing as the likeness of Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing."**

no longer saw it, i.e. particularly among his wrong actions on the Last Day. اسْتَغْفِرْ is the imperative form of the tenth verbal form which has the sense of both considering someone (or oneself) to have the quality of the root meaning, and, to seek it, i.e. 'consider Him to be One Who covers over your wrong actions' and thus 'seek from Him that He cover over your wrong actions'. In this sense the Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Habib[1], may Allah be pleased with him, said in his noble Diwan on the meaning of الإِسْتِغْفَارُ :

> وَمَعْنَاهُ سِتْرُ اللَّهِ لِلْعَبْدِ عَنْ ذَنْبٍ
>
> "Its meaning is the veil of Allah for the slave over a wrong action…"

"So glorify with praise of your Lord and seek His forgiveness". Praise and seeking forgiveness have already been mentioned and the meaning of "with praise of your Lord" in what precedes. If it is said, "Why did Allah order him to glorify and praise and seek forgiveness at the approaching of his appointed term?" then the answer is that He ordered the glorification and the praise as thanks for the help and the victory and the open triumph of Islam, and He ordered him with that and with seeking forgiveness at the approach of his term so that that would be a provision [for him] for the hereafter and preparation for the meeting with Allah.

إِنَّهُ is

إِنَّ 'truly'

هُ 'He'

كَانَ "He was" but here meaning more "He ever is …".

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> كَانَ has two types: ● "complete" (i.e. complete in it itself without the need of a predicate) with the meaning of became present, came about or occurred, and it makes the subject [of the verb] be in the nominative case; ● "defective", which puts the noun in the nominative case and the predicate in the accusative case [as in the ayah we are studying], and demands the constancy of the predicate for that which is predicated in its [the verb's] time. ● It is also used with the meaning of constancy, for example in His words, "And Allah is [always] forgiving, compassionate," "and your Lord is [always] powerful", and the like of that, of which there are many examples in Qur'an. Its meaning is, "He has always remained and will always remain described with that description (mercy, compassion and power, etc.)."

تَابَ (past tense) يَتُوبُ (present tense) returned, تَوْبَةً تَوْبًا (two verbal nouns) so that he [the one who does the action] is تَائِبٌ . تَوَّاب is having much turning (تَوْبَة) [to Allah]. And التَّوَّابُ

[1] Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Habib (d. 1972 CE) and author of the Diwan *Bughyah al-Murideen as-Sa'ireen wa Tuhfah as-Salikeen al-ʿArifeen.* He was a great Maliki faqih trained in the Mosque of the Qayrawiyyin and a Shaykh of the Shadhili-Darqawi Tariqah.

is the name of Allah, exalted is He, meaning “turning much to His slaves”. “Allah turned to His slave”, i.e. He inspired him to turn [to Him] before his تَوْبَة .

تَوَّابًا ‘constantly turning’. التَّوَّابُ is one of the names of Allah. As we have seen it comes from the same root as تَوْبَة – crudely translated as ‘repentance’. Tawwaab is of the form فَعَّال, words of which form relate to actions which are done repeatedly such as professional actions, thus حَلاَّج a wool-carder, خَبَّاز a baker, نَجَّار a carpenter, and among the names of Allah, الْغَفَّارُ the Repeatedly Forgiving, الرَّزَّاقُ the Provider again and again, and الْخَلاَّقُ the Creator again and again.

“When comes the help of Allah and the victory and you see people entering the deen of Allah in throngs,

then glorify with praise of Allah and seek His forgiveness.

Truly, He is ever turning [to His slaves].”

سورة أبو لهب – Abu Lahab

The cause of its revelation was that when His words were revealed, "And warn your closest kinsfolk"[1] the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, climbed upon as-Safa and cried out at the top of his voice, "*Ya sabahahu, ya sabahahu*" (a warning cry of danger for which Quraysh would assemble). Quraysh gathered to [hear] him and he said to them, "I am a warner of a painful punishment before you," and then he warned them collectively and individually. Abu Lahab said to him, "May you perish! Was it for this you gathered us together?" and so the surah was revealed.

Allah revealed about Abu Lahab, "Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab and perish he!" so that he was the first, last and only kafir of the generation of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to be mentioned by name by the Lord of Existence.

تَبَّتْ and تَبَّ are the feminine and masculine third person singulars of a past tense. Let us look at this point of Arabic grammar.

الْفِعْلُ الْمَاضِي in Arabic represents the past, so that تَبَّتْ means "Perished!" informing about an event that is already over and done with, for if the madi could be represented by any word it would be 'complete'. It represents the action which is already over and done, quite irrevocably. Yet all of us use it regularly for another form which is a prayer or alternatively a curse, for we say about the Messenger of Allah, "may Allah bless him and grant him peace" which is literally "Allah blessed him and granted him peace".

The ayah becomes an informing or a curse, "Perished the two hands of Abu Lahab and perished he", or "Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab and perish he!"

تَبَّتْ 'perished' or 'may she (they) perish'

يَدَا 'the two hands' which is short for يَدَانِ

أَبِي '[of] the father'

لَهَبٍ '[of] flame'

وَ 'and'

تَبَّ 'perished he' or 'may he perish'.

"Perish the hands of Abu Lahab". The meaning of تَبَّتْ (perished) is "lost" and تَبَابٌ (destruction) is total loss. Abu Lahab is ᶜAbd al-ᶜUzza ibn ᶜAbd al-Muttalib ibn Hashim and he was the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and he was one of the people who was most severe in enmity to him. If it is said, "Why did Allah mention him by his kunya rather than by his name?" then the answer has three aspects: ● one is that his kunya was

---

[1] Surah ash-Shuᶜara, ayah 214.

> more commonly used than his name, like Abu Bakr and others, and it was said that he was given the kunya Abu Lahab because of the way his face was aglow with beauty; ● second, that because his name was ᶜAbd al-ᶜUzza[1] He preferred to avoid that and [preferred] to use his kunya [instead]; ● third, that since he was one of the people of the Fire and flames, He called him by the kunya Abu Lahab so that it might fit His words, "He will roast in a fire possessing flames".

مَا 'not'

أَغْنَى 'he enriched' and it is the fourth form of غَنِيَ 'he was wealthy' and 'he was independent'. There are a wealth of important meanings in this root, for it is the root from which comes the name of Allah, الْغَنِيُّ 'The Wealthy', 'The Independent'. Here the ayah revolves around the concept of riches, wealth, etc. أَغْنَى the key word means to render rich but it is of vital importance that we dive deeper into this word to really grasp this ayah.

The root غَنِيَ 'he was wealthy, independent', is the opposite of the root فَقِرَ 'he was poor, needy or dependent'.

مَا أَغْنَى 'he did not enrich',

عَنْهُ i.e.

عَنْ 'from'

هُ 'him' 'it'.

مَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُ "it did not give independence from him or it". What did not give independence?

مَالُهُ and

مَالٌ 'property'

هُ 'his'

وَ 'and'

مَا 'what'

كَسَبَ 'he earned'.

Re-phrasing it we arrive at, "And his property and what he earned did not give independence from him".

Allah here in this ayah says that Abu Lahab had both wealth, probably inherited, and earnings, but that neither of them gave him الْغِنَى (independence).

> "It did not enrich him, [neither] his wealth nor what what he earned". It is possible for مَـا to be negation (i.e. as preceding) or a questioning ("What did it enrich him, his wealth and what he earned?") by which negation is [also] intended. ● And "his wealth" is the capital of his wealth and "what he earned" is the profit, ● or "his wealth" is that which he inherited and "what he earned" is

[1] ᶜUzza was the name of one of the main idols of the Quraysh.

that which he earned for himself. ● It has been said that "his wealth" is the totality of his wealth and what he earned.

سَ is a particle which when added on to the front of a present tense verb means 'will' i.e. it makes it future tense. The present tense, which is one of the three basic Arabic tenses, past, present and command, is really for those actions which are in motion but uncompleted, for example, 'I am writing a book'. It is not very far from that to say, 'I am going to London', and then to 'I am going to London tomorrow'. سَ and سَوْفَ add the meaning 'will' – 'I will go to London tomorrow'.

يَصْلَى 'he roasts' and it is from the root صَلِيَ 'he roasted' (which is very close to ص ل و the root from which صَلَوة comes.)

سَيَصْلَى 'he will roast'

نَارًا '[at or in] a fire'

ذَاتَ 'possessor (fem)' or 'one possessing the quality'

لَهَبٍ '[of] flame (lahab)'

"He will roast at a fire possessing flame". This is the decree that he would enter the Fire, and he died after that as a disbeliever.

وَامْرَأَتُهُ

وَ 'and'

امْرَأَة 'woman' meaning here 'wife'

هُ 'his'

وَامْرَأَتُهُ 'and his wife'. Therefore "he will roast [at] a fire possessor of flame, and his wife."

"And his wife," who rivalled him in hatred of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

حَمَّالَةَ 'carrier' (fem), in the sense of one who regularly, or even professionally, carries,

"And his wife the carrier of the firewood". The name of his wife was Umm Jamil bint Harb ibn Umayyah and she was the sister of Abu Sufyan and the aunt of Mu[c]awiyyah. Concerning the description of her as being the "carrier of firewood" there are four statements: ● one of them is that she used to carry firewood and thorns and throw them in the path of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in order to harm him; ● second, that it is a way of referring to her going about with slander, as it is said, "So and so carries firewood between people", i.e. he kindles the fire of enmity between them with slanders; ● third, it indicates her striving to harm the Muslims, as it is said, "So and so gathers firewood against so and so", when he means to harm him; ● fourth, that it is an expression for her wrong and her evil actions.

فِي 'in'

جِيدِ 'neck'

هَا ‘[of] her’

فِي جِيدِهَا ‘in her neck’

حَبْلٌ ‘a rope’ (but also the ordinary word for a vein or artery so that حَبْلُ الْوَرِيدِ is ‘the jugular vein’).

مِنْ ‘of’

مَسَد ‘twisted fibres of the palm’.

حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ “a rope of twisted fibres of the palm”.

“In her neck a rope of twisted palm fibres” الْجِيدُ is the neck, and الْمَسَدُ are [palm] fibres. It has been said that the rope is twined and plaited. There are three statements concerning what is meant by it: ● first, that it merely informs about her carrying firewood in this world according to the first statement [above], and in this there is contempt for her and a demonstration of the meanness of her state; ● second, her state in Jahannam will be like that, i.e. around her neck there will be a rope; ● third, she used to have a glorious necklace, and she said, “I will spend it in [creating] enmity against Muhammad”, and so He informed of her having a necklace of a rope of palm fibres as an omen and a reproof to her for her making a show of herself.

It is possible for His words “and his wife” and what follows to have different aspects of inflection (إِعْرَابٌ the grammatical analysis of the inflection of word endings) which [therefore] means that the stop (الْوَقْفُ)[1] will differ according to the differences in it, [therefore] “his wife” may be the subject of a nominal clause and “the carrier of the firewood” would be its predicate (i.e. “And his wife is the carrier of firewood”); ● or “the carrier of the firewood” could be an attribute [of “his wife”] and “in her neck a rope of palm fibre” its predicate (i.e. “and his wife, the carrier of firewood, in her neck there is a rope of palm fibre”); ● or “and his wife” could be conjoined to the pronoun in “he will roast” (i.e. “he will roast at a fire possessing flame and his wife” will also roast) and “the carrier of firewood” is an attribute or the predicate of a covert subject (i.e. “[she is] the

---

[1] The waqf is the place where the reciter pauses when reciting the Qur’an. Ibn Juzayy here gives a series of meanings of the ayah based on the allowed stops in recitation, as the different stops yield various grammatical differences. ᶜIlm at-tajweed requires that a reciter has a good knowledge of the different stops and that he understands when they are inappropriate to be made. ᶜAli ibn Abi Talib, may Allah ennoble his face, was once asked about His words, exalted is He, “**…and chant the Qur’an measuredly.**” (al-Muzzammil, ayah 4). He said that it means “with tajweed and comprehension of the stops (al-wuquf)”.

carrier of firewood”).

“Perish the hands of Abu Lahab and perish he. [Neither] his wealth nor what he earned avail him. He will roast at a fire possessing flames and his wife. The carrier of the firewood, in her neck a rope of palm-fibre.”

سورة الإخلاص – Sincerity

The cause of the revelation of this surah was that the Jews went to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and said, "Muhammad, describe your Lord to us and tell us His lineage, for He described Himself in the Tawrah and His lineage." So the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, trembled until he fell unconscious and Jibril came down upon him with this surah. It has been said, "The mushrikun said to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, 'Tell us the lineage of your Lord', and then it was revealed." According to the first version the surah is Madani, because the questioning of the Jews took place in Madinah, and according to the second it is Makki.

There are differences concerning the meaning of his statement, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "'Say: He Allah is one' is equal to one third of the Qur'an"[1]. It is said that that is in reward, i.e. for whoever recites it there is the reward equal to the reward of one who recites one third of the Qur'an. It is [also] said that that is in respect to the meanings and sciences that it contains because the sciences of the Qur'an are threefold: ● tawhid (the science of realising Allah's unity), ● judgements (الأَحْكَامُ) and ● stories (الْقِصَصُ), and this surah comprises tawhid and so it is one third of the Qur'an by this reasoning, and this is the most obvious and clear, and it was with this meaning that Ibn ᶜAtiyyah interpreted the hadith. What supports that is that in some transmissions of the hadith there is, "Allah divided the Qur'an up into three divisions and He made 'Say: He Allah is one' to be one of the three divisions of the Qur'an."

An-Nasa'i related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, heard a man reciting it and he said, "As for this one, Allah has forgiven him." In another version he said, "The Garden is obliged for him."

Muslim related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, sent a man on a raid and he would recite for his companions in the prayer, "Say: He Allah is one". When they returned, they mentioned that to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and he said, "Ask him for what reason he does that." They asked him and he said, "Because it is a

---

[1] Related by Muslim in his *Sahih* and also by at-Tirmidhi in his *Sunnah* collection.

description of the All-Merciful and I love to recite it." The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Tell him that Allah loves him." In a version that at-Tirmidhi made public there is that he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to the man, "Your love for it will enter you into the Garden."

At-Tirmidhi related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Whoever recites, 'Say: He Allah is one' one hundred times every day, then the wrong actions of fifty years will be forgiven him unless he owes a debt."

قُلْ 'say',

هُوَ 'He',

اللَّهُ

أَحَدٌ - 'one'.

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

أَحَدٌ has two meanings: ● "one", of which there is "Allah is one"; ● and the noun of a s pecies, meaning "man" (i.e. "anyone").

And in the commentary:

"Say: He, Allah, is one". The pronoun here (He), according to the Basrans (i.e. the grammarians of Basra) is the pronoun of the affair and the business (i.e. "it"), and what is meant by it is exaltation and deference, and its inflection (إِعْرَابٌ) is that it is a subject whose predicate is the phrase which comes after it, which explains and comments on it, (i.e. "it is…") and "Allah" is a subject and "one" is its predicate (i.e. "it is Allah [that] is one"). It has been said that "Allah" is the predicate and "one" is a substitute for it (i.e. "He is Allah, one"). It has been said that "Allah" is the substitute and "one" is the predicate (i.e. "He, Allah, is one").

Ahad has two meanings, ● one of which is that it is one of the nouns of negation which do not occur except in the inessential such as the saying, "There did not come to me anyone (أَحَدٌ), (i.e. "no-one came to me"). This is not the place for this meaning, but rather the place for it is in His words "and there is not for Him equal anyone (أَحَدٌ)". ● The other is that it is with the meaning of "one" (وَاحِدٌ) and its original is وَحَدٌ with و and then a ء was substituted for the و. This is the meaning here.

Know that the description of Allah, exalted is He, as One has three meanings all of which are authentic with respect to Allah, exalted is He: ● first, that He is One with no second with Him and

so it is a negation of number; ● second, that He is One (i.e. Unique) with no equal to Him, no partner to Him, just as you might say, “So and so is the [unique] one of his age”, i.e. there is no-one equal to him; ● third, that He is One, He is not divisible. The most obvious thing is that the meaning of the surah is to negate partnership (with Allah) for the purpose of refuting the mushrikin, as in His words, exalted is He, “and your god is one god”[1].

Az-Zamakhshari said, “Ahad is a description of unity and [it is] the negation of partners.” I say that Allah has established in Qur’an decisive proofs of His oneness, and there are very many examples in the Qur’an of that, of which the clearest are four proofs: ● first, His words, “So then is He Who creates like he who does not create?”[2] that since it is established firmly that Allah, exalted is He, is the Creator of all existent things it could not be that one of them is a partner to Him; ● second, His words, “If there had been in them (the heavens and the earth) gods except for Allah they (the heavens and the earth) would have become corrupted”[3]; ● third, His words, “If there were with Him gods as they say then they would have sought a way to the Lord of the Throne”[4]; ● fourth, His words, “And there is not with Him a god, for then each god would have gone off with what he had created and one would have exalted himself over the other”[5]. We have explained these ayat in their places and we have spoken about the reality of tawhid in commenting on His words, “and your god is one god”[6].

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ means that

“Allah is الصَّمَدُ”

الصَّمَدُ is He to Whom other-than-Him goes for its needs and He Who has no need of other-than-Him. الصَّمَدُ is the Enduringly Patient, the Timeless Changeless One and the Wealthy. It is one of the few names of Allah which is mentioned directly in conjunction with the unique name Allah, rather than paired with another such as are الرَّؤُوفُ الرَّحِيمُ and الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ etc.

---

[1] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 163.

[2] Surah an-Nahl, ayah 17.

[3] Surah al-Anbiya’, ayah 22.

[4] Surah al-Isra’, ayah 42.

[5] Surah al-Muminun, ayah 91.

[6] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 163.

“Allah is the Samad”. With respect to the meanings of As-Samad there are three statements: ● one, is that the Samad is the One to Whom one turns in [all] affairs, i.e. resorts to or seeks refuge with; ● another is that He is the One Who does not eat nor drink as in His saying, “And He feeds and He is not fed”[1]; ● third, that He is the One Who has no inside (i.e. no belly) and the first is the meaning here which is most obvious. Ibn cAtiyyah regarded it as the most weighty [opinion] since Allah gave everything that exists its existence, and their continuance in existence is by Him so that they need Him and depend on Him, i.e. they resort to Him since they cannot subsist by themselves. Our Shaykh Al-Ustadh Abu Jacfar ibn az-Zubayr[2] regarded it as the the most weighty view because of the occurrence of its meaning in the Qur’an wherever there is negated the idea of there being a son with Allah, exalted is He, such as in His saying in Maryam, “And they said, ‘Allah has taken a son’” which He concluded with His words, “Every one who is in the heavens and the earth comes to the All-Merciful as a slave.”[3] There is also His saying, “The Originator of the heavens of the earth, how could there be a son for Him?”[4] and His words, “And they said, ‘Allah has taken a son!’ Glory be to Him! Rather whatever is in the heavens and the earth is His”[5]. Similarly He mentioned it here with His words, “He did not give birth” so that it is a proof of His not having children. Az-Zamakhshari said, “صَمَد is [on the measure of] فَعَل with the meaning of مَفْعُول (the passive participle) because He is resorted to for all needs.”

لَمْ ‘did not’ and it is a word which when added to the present tense renders it into a negative of the past tense. It also truncates the present tense verb as in the following examples.

يَلِدُ ‘he gives birth’ or ‘he begets’

so that لَمْ يَلِدْ ‘He did not give birth’

“He did not give birth”. This is a refutation of whoever ascribed a son to Allah, such as the Christians in their saying “cIsa is the son of Allah”[6] and the Jews in their saying, “cUzair is the son

---

[1] Surah al-Ancam, ayah 14.

[2] The teacher of Ibn Juzayy.

[3] Surah Maryam, ayat 88-93.

[4] Surah al-Ancam, ayah 101.

[5] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 116.

[6] Surah at-Tawbah, ayah 30.

of Allah"1 and the Arabs in their saying, "The angels are the daughters of Allah". Allah has established the proofs of His not having a son in the Qur'an, and the clearest of them are four statements: ● the first, that the son must be of the same species as his father but Allah, exalted is He, is not of any species so that it is not possible for Him to have a son, and His words indicate that, "The Messiah the son of Maryam is a messenger and messengers have passed away before him. And his mother is a siddiqah (totally truthful and honest woman). They both used to eat food."2 So He described them with the attributes of coming-into and being in-time in order to negate their being described with the attributes of before-time and thus show the sayings of the disbelievers to be false; ● second, that the father only takes a son because of a need for him and Allah does not need anything, so He does not take a son, and it is this that His words. "They say, 'Allah has taken a son', Glory be to Him! He is the [totally] Independent"3 indicate; ● third, all of humanity are slaves of Allah and slavehood contradicts Lordship and He indicates this by His words, exalted is He, "Everyone who is in the heavens and the earth comes to the All-Merciful as a slave"4; ● fourth, no-one has a son except for one who has a wife and Allah, exalted is He, has not taken a wife so He can have no son and this is indicated by His saying, exalted is He, "How can there be a son for Him when He does not have a female companion?"5

وَ 'and'

لَمْ 'did not',

يُولَدُ 'he is given birth to'

so that لَمْ يُولَدْ "He was not given birth to".

"And He was not born". This is a refutation of the ones who said, "Give us your Lord's lineage," and that is because everything born is originated and Allah, exalted is He, He is the First Who has no beginning to His before-time existence, the One Who was and there was nothing other than Him with Him, so that it is not possible that He should be something born, exalted is He beyond

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Surah al-Ma'idah, ayah 75.

[3] Surah Yunus, ayah 68.

[4] Surah Maryam, ayah 93.

[5] Surah al-An^c^am, ayah 101.

that.

“He did not give birth and He was not born”.

وَ ‘and’

لَمْ ‘not’

يَكُنْ is from يَكُونُ ‘he is’ or ‘he will be’ truncated by the action of the لَمْ

so that لَمْ يَكُنْ “[he] was not” i.e. “there was not”

لَهُ “for Him”

كُفُوًا ‘equal’

أَحَدً ‘one’ or ‘anyone’.

“And there was not for Him equal anyone” or more plainly “and no-one is equal to Him”.

“And there is not for Him equal anyone.” الْكُفُوءُ is the one who is equal and resembles. Az-Zamakhshari said, “It is acceptable that it is derived from الْكَفَاءَةُ (equality) in marriage, so that the meaning would then be negation of a female companion”, but this is remote, and the first is correct. Its meaning is that Allah has no equal nor any who resemble Him or are like Him. It is acceptable to have a damma on the ف (i.e.كُفُؤًا) and a sukun (i.e. كُفْؤًا) along with damma on the ك, and it has been recited both ways. It is similarly acceptable to have a kasra on the kaf and a sukun on the fa’ (i.e. كِفْؤًا) and it is acceptable [to have] a kasrah on the ك and a fathah on the ف and a madd (a lengthening of that vowel i.e. كِفَآؤًا) and it is acceptable to have [either] a hamzah (كُفُؤًا) [or] the easier [pronunciation] (كُفُوًا) (i.e. the easier pronunciation which does not use the ء).

كُفُؤًا is in the accusative case because it is the predicate of كَانَ (i.e. of “there was not”) and its noun of action is “anyone” (i.e. “no-one is equal to Him”).

Ibn ᶜAtiyyah said, “And it is acceptable that كُفُؤًا should be in the accusative case denotative of state because of the fact that it is a description of an indefinite noun which it was made to precede.” If it is said, “Why is the genitive, and it is [the ‘Him’ in] “to Him”, brought before the subject of ‘was’ and its predicate [كُفُؤًا) whereas the adverb, if it does not appear as a predicate, should be [moved] to the end [of the sentence)?”[1] Then the answer has two aspects: ● one of the two is that it is brought forward out of concern for it and exaltation because it is a pronoun referring to Allah, exalted is He, and the way of the Arabs is to bring forward that which is more important; ● the

1 (i.e. rather than “there is no-one equal to Him” it is “**there is not to Him equal anyone**”)

other is that this genitive phrase completes the meaning of the predicate and perfects the intended purpose, because it is not the intention to deny that there are equal beings (i.e. beings equal to each other) but the intention is to deny that there are equals to Allah, exalted is He, and so for that reason concern was shown for this genitive phrase which contains this meaning and it was brought forward.

If it is said that, "His words, 'Say: He Allah is one' contain the negation of [the possibility of] a child and an equal, so then why does He then state it [again] textually after it?" Then the answer is that this is of the nature of singling out i.e. choosing the thing for mention after its coming under the generality of what has already been mentioned, such as His words, exalted is He, "And His angels and His messengers and Jibril and Mika'il"1. That is done for two reasons, each of which is correct here: ● one of them is emphasis, and certainly to negate [attribution] of children and equals to Allah ought to be emphasised in order to refute the disbelievers who say the contrary of that (i.e. affirm attribution of children and equals to Allah); ● the other is for making clear and explaining (بَيَانْ), since a matter coming under a general heading is not the same as being dealt with textually and specifically. So a textual reference to this is in order to clarify and explain the meaning and to provide a total refutation of the disbelievers and to make it quite certain that the proof has been established against them.

Tawhid

As this surah represents in its teaching of Tawhid, one third of Qur'an, and as that term recurs throughout our book, let us look here at what Ibn Juzayy says on its meaning. He says, in commentary on the ayah of Surah al-Baqarah, "وَ إِلَهُكُمْ و إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ – and your God is One God."

Know that people's tawhid of Allah has three degrees:

First, the tawhid of the generality of the Muslims which is that which preserves the person from destruction in the world and saves from abiding in the Fire in the next life, and it is the refutation of partners and equals (أَنْدَادْ), a female partner and children, [other] beings who resemble [Allah],

---

[1] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 98. Allah, exalted is He, mentions the angels but then goes on to single out and mention from the generality of the angels Jibril and Mika'il, peace be upon them, even though they are also angels and therefore come under that which was mentioned before. The reason, as Ibn Juzayy says, for this is in order to give emphasis and to show the difference between the general (ʿAmm) and specific (Khass) of the text.

and opposites.

The second degree is the tawhid of the elect which is that [the person of this degree] sees all actions issuing from Allah alone, witnessing that, by means of unveiling (مُكَاشَفَة), not by means of the reasoning which every Muslim attains. But the station of the elect in tawhid enriches the heart with an imperative knowledge which doesn't need proof. The fruit of this knowledge is the full devotion of attention to Allah, dependence on Him alone, and rejection of people, so that he doesn't hope for any but Allah, and fears no-one other than Him, since he sees no doer but Him, and he sees all people in the grasp of overwhelming power, and that none of the matter is in their hands. So he rejects secondary causes and discards [other] lords.

[The person of] the third degree does not see any in existence but Allah alone, so that he withdraws from looking at people until it is as if they were non-existent for him. This is what the Sufis call the station of annihilation (فَنَاء), which means becoming absent from people until he has become annihilated from his self and from his tawhid, i.e. he withdraws from that with his absorption in witnessing Allah.

It is to be noted that the term Tawhid is very often used as shorthand for ᶜAqeedah – the tenets of belief – but that Ibn Juzayy uses it here in its correct meaning of an existential mode of 'unifying', and an actual transformation of one's perception of existence.

"Say, 'He Allah is One.
Allah is He Whom one turns to in all affairs.
He did not give birth and He was not born.
And to Him there is not equal any one.'"

المعوّذتان – The Mu[c]awwidhatan

الْمُـعَـوِّذَتَان – Al-Mu[c]awwidhatan are the two surahs of seeking refuge and protection, thus their name is derived from the word which opens both of them – أَعُوذُ . Their power in providing protection is unequalled.

These two surahs ought to be prefaced with an account of the causes of their revelation which revolve around the last word of Surat al-Falaq – حَسَدَ – he envied. Yet the classical definition of envy removes it as far from our use of that word as can be. This envier of the surah looks at the other, sees the gift he or she has and only desires it to be removed from them. It is a totally malevolent and poisonous energy, may Allah protect us from it. We can understand the human desire to have a blessing the like of the one that belongs to someone else. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, honoured two types of envy – the desire to emulate the learned and knowing person who gives from his knowledge and the wish to copy the wealthy man who spends generously from what Allah gave him[1].

However the envier in this surah desires nothing but the removal and extinction of a blessing that someone else has, without even really desiring it for themselves. More revealingly the envy in question is a spiritual one, a desire for the removal of the messengership of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

The envier whose malice was the cause of the two surahs' revelations, was the Jew, Labid Ibn Al-[c]Asam who, seeing the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and knowing it to be true, recognising it as a fact, resented that prophethood had been given to one not of the Children of Israel and desired that it be taken from him. Not only did he desire that but he set to work using that other unseen knowledge – magic – to try to make him, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ill, or mad, and ultimately to kill him.

[1] This hadith is related in both the *Sahih* books on the authority of Ibn Mas[c]ud, may Allah be pleased with him.

سورة الفلق – The Dawn

قُلْ – ‘Say!’

أَعُوذُ ‘I seek refuge’

بِ ‘by’ or ‘with’

رَبِّ ‘the Lord’

الْفَلَقِ a word meaning the cleaving of something in the way that the water cleaves and splits the earth when it emerges as a spring, or a shoot cleaves and splits a seed when it sprouts from it, and in the way that the light of the dawn on the horizon splits the earth from the sky. Thus it is a word also for the dawn.

رَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ‘The Lord of that which is cleaved (the dawn)’.

> “Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of that which is cleaved (the dawn) (فَلَق)”. The meaning of “I seek refuge”1 has previously been examined in the section on seeking refuge and the meaning of “Lord” in the appended dictionary and in the Fatihah. There are three statements concerning الْفَلَقُ (literally “the splitting or cleaving”): ● first, that it is the daybreak or dawn, and thus we have “Cleaver of the dawns”2. Az-Zamakhshari said, “It is [of the form] فَعَلٌ and having the meaning of the passive participle (مَفْعُولٌ i.e. ‘that which is cleaved’ or ‘split’)”; ● second, that it is every thing which Allah causes to split or break open, such as the splitting of the earth from plants, and mountains from the springs, and clouds from rain, and wombs from children and the grain and date-stone[3], etc.; ● third, that it is a well in the Fire[4], and this has been related of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

مِنْ ‘from’

الشَّرِّ – Evil

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah show mercy to him, in commentary on a portion of a hadith[5] makes the

---

[1] See page 67.

[2] Surah al-Anᶜam, ayah 96.

[3] Allah says in Surah al-Anᶜam, ayah 95, ≈ÊÒÓ†«‰‰ÒÓÁÓ† · Ó«‰,Ô†«‰ÚÕÓ»Ò†ËÓ«‰ÊÒÓËÓÈ “Indeed, Allah splits the grain [of corn] and the date stone.”

[4] This has been related on the authority of Saᶜid ibn Jubayr, the student of Ibn ᶜAbbas.

[5] Hadith 82 from *Al-Kalim at-Tayyib*, the hadith in full is:

observations that follow:

وَالْخَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي يَدَيْكَ ، وَالشَّرُّ لَيْسَ إِلَيْكَ

"All good is in Your hands and evil does not pertain to You…"

Know that the school of the people of truth of the scholars of hadith, and the people of fiqh among the Companions and the Followers and those who came after them of the people of knowledge of the Muslims is that all beings, the good of them and the bad of them, their benefit and their harm, all of them are from Allah, exalted is He, and they are by His will and His decree. So we must

---

ʿAli, may Allah be pleased with him, said that when Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, stood up for prayer, he said:

ËÓÃÒÓÁÚ Ô†ËÓÃÚÁÍÓ†‰‰ÒÓ–Í†·Ó◊Ó—Ó†«‰”ÒÓÂÓËÓ« †
ËÓ«‰√Ó—Ú÷Ó†ÕÓÊÍ·Î«†ËÓÂÓ«†√ÓÊÓ«†ÂÊÓ†«‰ÚÂÔ‘Ú—„ÍÊÓ†¨†
≈ÊÒÓ†’Ó‰«Ó Í†ËÓÊÔ”Ô„Í†ËÓÂÓÕÚÍÓ«ÍÓ†ËÓÂÓÂÓ« Í†‰‰ÒÓÁ†
—Ó»Ò†«‰ÚŸÓ«‰ÓÂÍÊÓ†¨†‰«Ó†‘Ó—Í„Ó†‰ÓÁÔ†ËÓ»–ß‰„Ó†
√ÔÂ—Ú Ô†ËÓ√ÓÊÓ«†ÂÊÓ†«‰ÚÂÔ”Ú‰ÂÍÊÓ†¨†«‰‰ÒÓÁÔÂÒÓ†
√ÓÊÚ Ó†«‰ÚÂÓ‰„Ô†¨†‰«Ó†≈‰ÓÁÓ†≈‰«ÒÓ†√ÓÊÚ Ó†¨†√ÓÊÚ Ó†
—Ó»ÒÍ†ËÓ√ÓÊÓ«†ŸÓ»ÚœÔ„Ó†¨†ÿÓ‰ÓÂÚ Ô†ÊÓ·Ú”Í†¨†
ËÓ«ŸÚ Ó—Ó·Ú Ô†»–ÓÊÚ»Í†¨†·Ó«⁄Ú·—Ú‰Í†–ÔÊÔË»Í†
ÃÓÂÍŸÎ«†¨†≈ÊÒÓÁÔ†‰«Ó†ÍÓ⁄Ú·—Ô†«‰–ÒÔÊÔË»Ó†≈‰«ÒÓ†√ÓÊÚ Ó†
¨†ËÓ«ÁÚœÊÍ†‰√ÓÕÚ”ÓÊ†«‰√ÓŒÚ‰«Ó‚†¨†‰«Ó†ÍÓÁœÍ†
‰√ÕÚ”ÓÊÁÓ«†≈‰«ÒÓ†√ÓÊÚ Ó†¨†ËÓ«’Ú—·Ú†ŸÓÊÒÍ†
”ÓÍÒ∆ÓÁÓ«†‰«Ó†ÍÓ’Ú—·Ô†ŸÓÊÒÍ†”ÓÍÒ∆ÓÁÓ«†≈‰«ÒÓ†√ÓÊÚ Ó†¨†
‰Ó»ÒÓÍÚ„Ó†ËÓ”ÓŸÚœÓÍÚ„Ó†¨†ËÓ«‰ÚŒÓÍÚ—Ô†„Ó‰ÒÔÂÔ†·Í†
ÍÓœÓÍÚ„Ó†¨†ËÓ«‰‘ÒÓ—ÒÓ†‰ÓÍÚ”Ó†≈‰ÓÍÚ„Ó†¨†√ÓÊÓ«†»„Ó†
ËÓ≈‰ÓÍÚ„Ó†¨†† Ó»Ó«—Ó„Ú Ô†ËÓ ÓŸÓ«‰ÓÍÚ Ó†¨†√Ó”Ú ÓÚ·—Ó„Ó†
ËÓ√Ó ÔË»Ô†≈‰ÓÍÚ„Ó

"I have turned my face as a *hanif* (one by nature inclined to the Truth) towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and I am not one who associates partners with Allah. My prayer and my devotion, my life and my death belong to Allah the Lord of the Universe, Who has no partner. That is what I have been commanded, and I am one of the Muslims. O Allah, You are the King. There is no god but You. You are my Lord and I am Your slave. I have wronged myself, and I acknowledge my wrong action, so forgive me all my wrong actions, none forgives wrong actions but You; and guide me to the best qualities of character, none guide to the best of them but You; and avert the evil qualities [of character] from me, for none avert the evil ones of them from me but You. I come to serve and please You. All good is in Your hands and evil does not pertain to You. I [exist] by You and [am returning] to You, blessed are You and greatly exalted, I seek Your forgiveness and I turn in repentance to You." (Muslim narrated it. It is said that it was in the night prayer.)

interpret this hadith. The people of knowledge have mentioned some answers to it:

One of which, and the most famous, is that which an-Nadr ibn Shumail and other Imams after him said, that its meaning is,"Nearnesss cannot be sought to You [through it]."

Second, "It [evil] does not ascend to You, but it is only al-Kalim at-Tayyib (the Good Words) which ascend."

Third, "It must not be attributed to You, out of courtesy. One cannot say, 'O Creator of Evil!' even though He is the Creator of it, just as one cannot say, 'O Creator of pigs!' even though He is their Creator."

Fourth, "It [evil] is not evil from the point of view of Your wisdom, for You do not create anything without purpose.")

(Muslim narrated the hadith. It is said that it was in the night prayer.)

This is a clear statement of the position of the Muslims on this matter.

The people of the view of two polar forces in conflict have a name in Qur'an – the Majus – the Magians, who are popularly thought of as fire-worshippers but more significantly are the people who believed in a god of good and a god of evil in conflict, with the former only narrowly winning.

We are unitarians pure and simple. All stems from Allah, both good and evil which are not two absolute opposing principles. As the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said, when asked by the angel Jibril about Iman, "… and [that you affirm] the decree, the good of it and the evil of it is from Allah ta^cala"[1].

Yet "And His mercy encompasses every thing"2, including those we think of as evil.

مَا '[of] what'

خَلَقَ 'He created'

"From the evil of what He created". This is general with respect to every created thing and their evil falls into many different categories, may Allah give us refuge from them. "What" can here be taken as either ● a relative pronoun (i.e. that which "from the evil of that which He created") ● or as mawsufah (descriptive i.e. 'which' "from the evil which He created") ● or masdariyyah (infinitive).

وَ 'and'

---

[1] Part of a lengthy narration in which the angel Jibril, peace be upon him, came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and questioned him about the deen. It has been narrated on the authority of [c]Umar ibn al-Khattab by Muslim in his *Sahih.*

[2] Surah al-A[c]raf, ayah 156.

مِنْ ‘from’

شَرِّ ‘evil [of]’ or ‘mischief’

غَاسِقٍ is ‘darkness’ or ‘the moon’.

إِذَا ‘when’

وَقَبَ is ‘it is dense’ or ‘it enters’ or ‘it is eclipsed’.

People in a natural condition know that the dusk after the setting of the sun is a time for unhealthy forces to emerge, either unseen jinn forces or human.

“And from the evil of غَاسِقٍ when it وَقَبَ ”. There are eight statements about this: ● first, that it is the night when it becomes dark, of which there is His saying, exalted is He, “Up to the darkness of the night” and this is the statement of the majority. This is because the darkness of the night is when the people of evil from among both the Jinn and human beings spread abroad. For that reason it is said proverbially, “The night is the best concealer of woe and distress”; ● second, that it is the moon. An-Nasa’i related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, saw the moon and said, “Aᶜishah, seek refuge with Allah from the evil of this because it is the غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ’”[1]. This act of darkening then is its eclipse (i.e. “and from the evil of the moon when it is eclipsed”) because waqab in the language of the Arabs can be with the meaning of darkness and blackness, and with the meaning of entrance, so the meaning is “when it enters [into the eclipse]” or when it is darkened by it; ● third, that it is the sun when it sets, and the word waqaba according to this has the meaning of darkening or entering; ● fourth, that the ghasiq is the day when it enters into the night which is close to the preceding [opinion]; ● fifth, that the ghasiq is the falling of [meteors from the direction of] the Pleiades[2], for sicknesses and plagues used to be stirred up at that time. It is related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “The star, it is the ghasiq,” and it is possible that he meant the Pleiades; ● sixth, that it is the penis when it is erect, which statement an-Naqqash[3] related of Ibn ᶜAbbas; ● seventh,

---

[1] Also related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* and at-Tirmidhi.

[2] The seven stars in the constellation of Taurus which are closely grouped together. They are also known as the ‘Seven Sisters’.

[3] Abu Bakr Muhammad an-Naqqash, of the later generation of Muslims, he was an authority on Qur’anic recitation and commentary on Qur’an.

az-Zamakhshari said, “It is possible that by the ghasiq is meant the black type of snake and that its waqab is its striking”; ● eighth, that it is Iblis, which is what as-Suhayli related.

وَ ‘and’

مِنْ ‘from’

شَرِّ ‘evil [of]’

النَّفَّاثَاتِ ‘women who repeatedly spit’ from نَفَثَ is ‘he spat’ or ‘blew’, and نَفَّاثٌ means ‘someone who repeatedly or professionally spits’.

فِي الْعُقَدِ ‘in knots’.

“And from the evil of women who blow [with spittle] in knots”.

Who were they in the events which were the cause of this revelation? They were the daughters of Labid Ibn al-ᶜAsam. They, at his instigation, had tied eleven knots in a string and invoked a curse on the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, over

“And from the evil of female blowers on knots”. “النَّفْثُ is like blowing but without spittle or saliva,” said Ibn ᶜAtiyyah. Az-Zamakhshari said, “It is blowing with some spittle, and this blowing is a type of magic, which is that one blows on knots which one has tied in a thread or the like, with the name of one to be bewitched so that it harms him.”

Ibn ᶜAtiyyah related that a trustworthy person told him he saw among some people in the western Sahara a red thread in which had been tied knots on account of some young camels which prevented them from suckling from their mothers. Whenever they untied a knot, that young camel would go to its mother and suckle right away.

Az-Zamakhshari said, “Regarding seeking refuge from the female blowers on knots there are three points: ● one is that one seeks refuge from the like of their action, which is magic, and from whoever believes in that; ● second, that one seeks refuge from their deceiving the people and their trouble [which they cause]; ● thirdly, that one seeks refuge from the evil which occurs from their blowing.”

The word النَّفَّاثَاتُ (those [fem.] who blow) is a grammatical construction of intensification (i.e. فَعَّالٌ) and the noun which is qualified is understood so that the phrase would be “the blowing women” or the “the blowing group” or the “blowing selves”, but the first is the most correct because it indicates the daughters of Labid ibn al-ᶜAsam, the Jew, who were magicians who cast a spell, they and their father, upon the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and they tied eleven knots. So Allah revealed al-Muᶜawwidhatayn as eleven ayat the same number as the

knots, and Allah healed His messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

If it is said, "Why is النَّفَّاثَاتُ made definite with the alif and the lam (i.e. "the blowing women") but that which is before it is left indefinite, i.e. "a darkness", and also that which comes after it, i.e. "an envier", whereas all of it is sought protection from?" Then the answer is that "the blowers" are made definite in order to give the sense of being general since every "blower" is evil, as opposed to a darkness and an envier, in some of which there is evil and in others not.

وَمِن شَرِّ 'and from the evil [of]'
حَاسِد 'an envier'.
إِذَا 'when'
حَسَدَ 'he envies'.

"From the evil of an envier when he envies". Envy is a disapproved characteristic both constitutionally [in the human] and in the sharīᶜah. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Al-Hasad eats up good deeds as the fire eats up firewood."[1] One of the men of knowledge[2] said, "Al-Hasad is the first act by which Allah was disobeyed both in heaven and on the earth. As for in heaven, Iblis envied Adam, and as for in the earth, Qabil killed his brother, Habil[3], because of envy."

Moreover envy has degrees: ● the first is that a man should love to see the disappearance of a blessing which his brother Muslim has, even though it would not be transferred to him, rather he dislikes to see Allah blessing anyone else and suffers pain because of it; ● second, that he should love to see the disappearance of this blessing because of his own desire of it hoping that it would be transferred to him; ● third, that he should hope for himself the like of this blessing without wishing for the other to lose it, and this is acceptable and it is not really envy, but it is only ghibtah [of

---

[1] Narrated by Abu Dawud as-Sijistani in his *Sunan* collection.

[2] It is said that the person was Abu Saᶜid Hasan al-Basri, may Allah show mercy to him. He was of the successors and grew up by the side of ᶜAli ibn Abi Talib, may Allah ennoble his face. He was born in Madinah where he grew up and he died in Basra (d. 110 AH). He was given understanding of the deen. It is reported that he once said, "Hope and forgetfulness are two great blessings for Bani Adam. If it were not for them, the Muslims would not walk in the streets."

[3] The anglicised versions of these names are respectively Cain and Abel.

which the preceding words are the exact definition].

The envier harms himself in a threefold manner: ● one of which is that he acquires wrong actions since envy is forbidden; ● second, it is discourteous towards Allah, exalted is He, since the reality of envy is dislike of Allah's blessing His slave and opposition to Allah in His act; ● third, the pain he inflicts on his own heart from the multitude of his worries and unhappiness. We desire passionately of Allah that He should make us envied and not enviers, since the envied is in good fortune and the envier is in distress and affliction. To Allah be attributed the good of the one who said:

> "I have mercy on my enviers because of the excess
> of what their breasts enclose of spite and rancour.
> They saw what Allah had done with me
> so their eyes were in a garden
> and their hearts in a fire."

Another said:

> "If they envy me I do not blame them,
> Before me the best people were envied.
> So may it continue for me and for them what I have and they have,
> and most of us die enraged because of what he finds."

Moreover the envier will never give up his enmity and trying to befriend him will be of no benefit. He is a wrongdoer who complains as if he were wronged. Certainly the one who said the following was truthful:

> "An end can be hoped for every enmity
> except for the enmity of one who is your enemy out of envy."

And the Sage of the Poets said:

> "And the most unjust of Allah's creatures is he who spends the night envious
> of he who spends the night at ease in His blessings."

Ibn ʿAtiyyah said that one of the masters said, "This surah is five ayat long, and it is the one which people mean by their saying to the envious one whose 'eye' (i.e. evil eye) is feared, 'The five be upon your eye!'"

If it is asked, "Why did He say, 'When it darkens' and 'When he envies' and so made it conditional on the 'when' which requires choosing particularly some moments?" Then the answer is that the evil of the envious and his harm only come about when he is envious, and at that moment he will

harm by his word or by his action or by his being afflicted with the "eye", for the eye of the envious is a killer. As for when his envy is past and he does not behave under its influence, then his evil is weak, and for that reason the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "There are three from which no-one is safe: envy, suspicion (or opinion) and evil omens[1]. The way out of envy is that it does not last, the way out of suspicion is that one doesn't [try to] verify [it][2], and the way out of evil omens is that one does not return [to them]." For this reason He chose it by His saying, "when it darkens".

If it is said, "His saying, 'From the evil of what He created' is general and includes everything that follows, so why did He mention what follows at all?" Then the answer is that this is a specific mention to show concern for the [particular things] mentioned after the general, and those things mentioned in this surah were underlined after the general statement because of the magic with which the Jews cast a spell on the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and because of the severity of their envy of him.

"Say, 'I seek refuge with the Lord of the dawn from the evil of what He creates, and from the evil of darkness when it is intense, and from the evil of women who blow on knots and from the evil of an envier when he envies.'"

---

[1] Allah, exalted is He, says with regards to evil omens and those who practise sorcery, "**A sorcerer shall never prosper wherever he goes.**" Surah Taha, ayah 68.

The majority of the scholars agree on the fact that any sort of magic is forbidden to the Muslims. As for those who practise sorcery there is no doubt that they thereby partake in shirk.

[2] The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Beware of suspicions, as they are the most untruthful of narrations." It was related by both al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah.

The Muslims have been given a refined science of having a good opinion of their fellow Muslims, as this brings strength to the community and worries the enemies of the deen of Allah. Allah says in Surah al-Hujurat, ayah 6, with regards to being cautious and careful about what one hears and relates to others, "**…if a corrupt person comes with news, verify it so that you might not hurt others out of ignorance being regretful of what you have done.**"

سورة الناس – Mankind

قُلْ اَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ "Say, 'I seek refuge with the Lord of…'"

النَّاس 'people' or 'mankind' which derives from the root أَنِسَ 'he was sociable, companionable, conversable, friendly' which gives إِنْسٌ 'mankind' and from that الإِنْسَانُ 'Man' 'the human being'. It is also said that it is from نَسِيَ 'he forgot'; thus the saying attributed to one of the Companions, "He was called man because he forgot." سُمِّيَ الإِنْسَانَ لأَنَّهُ نَسِيَ [1].

The root, according to the former, is from أَنِسَ – which has meanings of being sociable and intimate.

"Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind". If it is said, "Why did He put 'Lord' in a genitive construction with 'mankind' [only] (i.e. call Him 'The Lord of mankind') whereas He is the Lord of everything?" Then the answer is that the seeking refuge here occurs [specifically] from the evil of the whisperer within the breasts of mankind, so that He singled them out for mention because they are the ones seeking refuge with this prayer and the ones intended here rather than others[2].

مَلِكِ النَّاسِ 'the King of mankind',

إِلَهِ النَّاسِ 'the God of mankind'.

"The King of mankind, God of mankind". This is an explicative apposition (i.e. these two phrases are in explanation of the first).

If it is asked, "Why did He give priority to His description, exalted is He, as 'Lord' then 'King' and then 'God'?" Then the answer is that this is according to the arrangement of [superiority] ascending [from the lower] to the higher. That is because the 'Lord' can be used for many people, as it is said, "So and so is the lord of the house," and the like. He began with that because of the share in its meaning [that mankind has]. As for 'King' it is not used except for [certain] individuals among mankind, i.e. the kings, and there is no doubt that they are higher than all the rest of mankind. For that reason He used it after the word 'Lord'. As for 'the God' then he is higher than the king and

---

[1] This is said to refer to the words of Allah, exalted is He, in Surah al-A^{c}raf, ayah 172, "**When your Lord brought forth from the loins of the descendants of Adam their seed and made them testify against themselves. He said, 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Yes! We testify.' [This] in case you say on the day of Rising, 'We were unaware of this.'**" In other words, man was named ≈ Ê Ú ” Ó « Ê when he forgot the covenant he had with his Lord, to testify to His tawhid and Lordship, when he came to the world.

[2] i.e. the Jinn.

for that reason kings do not claim to be gods, because there is only one god [who has] no partner to Him and no equal, and so He concluded with it.

If it is asked, "Why did He state the governed noun in the genitive construction 'mankind' the second and the third time (i.e. saying, "King of mankind, God of mankind") and He did not use the pronoun (i.e. "their King, their God") because of His previous mentioning of them in "The Lord of mankind" or why did He not content Himself with making it obvious the second time?" (i.e. "The Lord of Mankind, the King of Mankind, *their* God" using a pronoun in the third instance). Then the answer is that since it is an explicative apposition it is good within it to make it clear and that is by stating the noun rather than using a pronoun, and He meant also to emphasise the word which He repeated, like the saying of the poet:

"I do not see death, that anything outruns death;
Death spoils the pleasure of the rich and the poor."

مِن شَرِّ 'from the evil of'

الْوَسْوَاس "The whispering". It is derived from "whispering" which is hidden speech and it is possible that it has the meaning of the "one who whispers", being as if it were the active participle. This is what is obvious from the words of Ibn ᶜAtiyyah, "The 'whisperer' is one of the names of Shaytan". It is also possible that it is a verbal noun (i.e. "the whispering") by which the one who whispers is described, as a form of exaggeration like عَدَّلَ and صَوَّمَ (second form verbs which intensify the meaning of the first form), or it can be that there is an understood but unstated governing noun, i.e. the "one with the quality of" (ذِي) whispering. Az-Zamakhshari said, "The verbal noun, whispering, is only with disbelief."

الْخَنَّاس "Slinking". Its meaning is the one who turns back upon his heels continuously but comes back and tries again and that is a characteristic of Shaytan, because he whispers, and then when the slave remembers Allah and seeks refuge with Him from him he goes far away from him. Then he returns to him when he forgets to remember [Allah]. He slinks when he goes away and upon his return after that.

"From the evil of the slinking whisperer"

الذِي 'the one who'

يُوَسْوِسُ ‘he whispers’
فِي ‘in’
صُدُورِ ‘breasts [of]’
النَّاسِ ‘men’

“The one who whispers in the breasts of men”. The whispering of Shaytan in the breast of man has many types, ● of which there is his corrupting his faith – causing doubts in his beliefs. ● If he is not able to do that he will tell him to do acts of disobedience. ● Then if he is not able to do that, he will hold him back from acts of obedience. ● Then if he is not able to do that he will involve him in showing off in his acts of obedience in order to bring them to nothing. ● If he is safe from that then he will make him conceited with himself and with the increase in his actions. ● Of it too there is that he will light in his heart the fire of envy, spite and anger until he will lead man to the worst of actions and ugliest of states.

The cure for his whispering lies in three things: ● one of them is to increase in the dhikr (remembrance and mention) of Allah; ● second, to increase in seeking refuge with Allah from him, and the most useful thing in that respect is the recitation of this surah; ● third, he must oppose him and resolve to disobey him.

If it is asked, “Why did He say ‘in the breasts of men’ and not say ‘in the hearts of men’?” Then the answer is that it indicates the lack of establishment of the whispering, and that it is not a state of the heart, rather it hovers in the breast around the heart.

مِنَ ‘of’ in this context rather than ‘from’
الْجِنَّةِ ‘the Jinn’. Pronunciation of al-Jinnah (the Jinn) must be distinguished from al-Jannah (the Garden) although they come from the same root.
وَالنَّاسِ ‘and [of] mankind’.

“Of the Jinn and mankind”. This explains the species of the whisperer and that he is of Jinn and of mankind. Moreover, by the whisperer among mankind it may be meant one who insinuates by his deception and by his foul words, for he is a Shaytan, as He said, exalted is He, “Shaytans of Jinn and mankind”[1]. Or it may be that He means the self (nafs) of man when it tells him to do wrong,

[1] Surah al-An^c^am, ayah 112.

because it is "continually commanding evil" 1, but the first is more obvious.

It has been said, "and of mankind" is conjoined to "the whisperer" as if He said, "I seek refuge from the evil of the whisperer among the Jinn and from the evil of mankind", and mankind, according to this, are not of those who whisper, but the first [opinion] is more obvious and more well known.

If it is asked, "Why did He conclude and seal the Qur'an with al-Mu^c^awwidhatan and what is the wisdom in that?" Then the answer has three aspects: ● first, our Shaykh, Ustadh Abu Ja^c^far ibn az-Zubayr said, "Since the Qur'an is one of the greatest blessings upon His slaves and blessing is expected to be a target of envy, then He concluded [the Qur'an] with that seeking refuge with Allah which would extinguish envy"; ● second, it appears to me that it was concluded with al-Mu^c^awwidhatayn because the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said about them, "There have been revealed to me ayat the like of which have never been seen,"[2] just as he said about the Opening (Fatihah) of the Book, "There has not been revealed in the Tawrah nor in the Injil nor in the Furqan the like of it,"[3] so He opened the Qur'an with a surah the like of which has not been revealed and He concluded it with two surahs the like of which have not been seen, in order to join the best beginning to the best conclusion. Do you not see that discourses, treatises and poems, etc., are types of speech and people only consider in them the beauty of their beginnings and their conclusions; ● third, it appears to me also that, since He ordered the reciter to commence his recitation with the act of seeking refuge from the accursed Shaytan, He concluded the Qur'an with al-Mu^c^awwidhatayn in order to have seeking refuge with Allah at the beginning of the recitation and at the end of that which he recites of the recitation, so that the seeking refuge would encompass the two extremities of beginning and ending, and so that the reciter would be protected by the guarding and protecting of Allah with Whom he sought refuge from the beginning

---

[1] Surah Yusuf, ayah 53, **"Indeed the nafs is continually commanding evil, except for that upon which my Lord has mercy."**

[2] Related by an-Nasa'i, at-Tirmidhi and Muslim on the authority of ^c^Uqbah ibn ^c^Amir, may Allah be pleased with him.

[3] Related by Malik and an-Nasa'i and others from Abu Hurairah and Ubayy ibn Ka^c^b, may Allah be pleased with them.

of his affair to the end of it. And success is through Allah, there is no Lord other than Him.

"Say, 'I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the slinking whisperer who whispers in the breasts of mankind, from Jinn and mankind."

سورة الفاتحة أو أمّ القرءان

The Opener or The Source of the Qur'an

It is also named Surah al-Hamdulillah, the Fatihah (the Opener) of the Book, the Protector (الْوَاقِيَّةُ), the Healer (شَّافِيَّةُ) and the Seven Oft-Repeated (سَبْعٌ مِنَ الْمَثَانِي). There are twenty beneficial points to note about it apart from what I have [already] mentioned in the dictionary of terms [by way] of explanations of its words. There is disagreement as to whether it is Makkan or Madinan. There is no disagreement that it is seven ayat, except that ash-Shafiʿi counts the Basmalah as one of its ayat and Maliki [scholars] drop it and count [instead] "…You blessed them" as an ayah.

One: The recitation of the Fatihah in the salah is a requisite (وَاجِبٌ) with Malik and ash-Shafiʿi, as opposed to Abu Hanifah. His argument is his saying, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to the one he was teaching the salah "Recite that which is easy of the Qur'an."[1]

Second: There is disagreement as to whether the beginning of the Fatihah contains an ellipsis [in order] to instruct the worshippers, i.e. "*Say*: 'Praise belongs to Allah …'" or whether it is the beginning of Allah's speech. There must be an ellipsis in "You we worship…" (e.g. "*Say*: 'You we worship …'") and what follows.

الْحَمْدُ 'the praise' and from it حَامِدٌ 'a praiser' حَمِيدٌ 'praiser/praised' suggesting the fullness and intensity of that condition and yet also the opposite, the object of praise, and the superlative أَحْمَدُ 'more or most حَمِيدٌ', مَحْمُودٌ 'praised', مُحَمَّدٌ 'repeatedly praised'.

Third: الْحَمْدُ (praise) is more general and inclusive than الشُّكْرُ (thanks or gratitude), because

[1] Ismaʿil ibn Kathir says in his *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim* "Abu Hanifah, may Allah have mercy on him, inferred from this ayah, and it is *__And recite what is easy for you of the Qur'an__,' (Surah al-Muzzammil, ayah 20) that it is not individually a requisite [to] recite the Fatihah in the prayer. He supports his position with the hadith 'Then recite what is easy with you of the Qur'an (part of a *mashhur* hadith narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). However, the majority of scholars reply with what is narrated from ʿUbad ibn Samit, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'There is no prayer for he who does not recite the Fatihah of the Book' and the *marfuʿ* hadith of Abu Hurairah, 'There is no reward of the prayer of he who doesn't recite the Umm al-Qur'an' (related by Ibn Khuzayma in his *Sahih*)." Tafsir on Surah al-Muzzammil, ayah 20, from *Mukhtasar Tafsir ibn Kathir*, vol. 3.

thanks and gratitude are only a recompense for a favour, whereas الْحَمْدُ is both a recompense like thanks and is also spontaneous praise. Similarly الشُّكْرُ may be more general and inclusive than الْحَمْدُ because praise is expressed by the tongue, and thanks is expressed by tongue, heart and limbs.

If you understand the universal nature of الْحَمْدُ you will know that your saying الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ requires praise of Him for His majesty, vastness, unity, might, bestowal of favours, knowledge, ability and power, wisdom and other attributes, and that it encompasses the meanings of His ninety-nine beautiful names, and that it requires thanking Him and praising Him for every favour He has given and mercy He has bestowed upon all His creation in this world and the next. What a word [it is] which gathers together that which volumes find difficult to express, and the intellects of created beings concur upon as being unable to enumerate. Let it suffice you that Allah made it the beginning of His Book and the conclusion of the supplication of the people of the Garden[1].

Fourth: Thanks with the tongue is praise of the Bestower of Blessings and speaking about the blessings. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "To talk about blessings is gratitude."[2] Thanks expressed by the limbs means to act in obedience to Allah and to abandon disobedience to Him. Thanks with the heart is recognition of the magnitude of the blessing and the knowledge that it is a gracious bestowal and not from the slave's own merit.

Know that the blessings which require gratitude cannot be enumerated, but they can be expressed in terms of three categories: ● worldly blessings such as health and wealth; ● blessings of the deen such as knowledge and carefulness (taqwa); ● and other-wordly blessings, which are one's being recompensed with much reward for few actions in a short life.

---

[1] This refers to the supplication that the believers will make in the Garden, "**Their prayer in it will be 'Glory be to You, O Allah,' and peace will be their greeting therein, and their prayer will conclude, 'Praise belongs to Allah the Lord of the Worlds.'**" (Surah Yunus, ayah 10).

[2] Part of a narration related by ash-Sha^c^bi on the authority of an-Nu^c^man ibn Bashir that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "He who is not grateful for a little cannot be grateful for a lot, and he who is not grateful to people cannot be grateful to Allah [whereas] to talk about blessings is gratitude, and leaving it is ingratitude (kufr). The community (jama^c^ah) [leads to] mercy, and dissension [leads to] debasement." (Quoted by al-Qrtubi in his *Jami^c^ Ahkam al-Qur'an* Tafsir ^c^ala Surah *Wa'd-Duha*.

People have two ranks with respect to gratitude: ● there is the one who shows gratitude for the blessings which come to him particularly; ● and there is the one who thanks Allah on behalf of all His creatures for the blessings which reach all of them.

There are three degrees of gratitude: ● the degree of the ordinary people is gratitude for blessings; ● the degree of the elect is gratitude for blessings and for misfortune, and in every state; ● and the degree of the elect of the elect is that they are absent from blessing through witnessing the Bestower of blessings. A man said to Ibrahim ibn Adham[1], "Who are the best of men?" He reflected and said, "The poor who when they are prevented (refused), are grateful, and when they are given something they prefer others to themselves."

One of the virtues of gratitude is that it is both one of the attributes of The Truth[2] [as well as] an attribute of people, because one of the names of Allah is الشَّاكِرُ (the Recompenser, literally: the Grateful) and الشَّكُورُ (the Fully Grateful), both of which I have explained in the dictionary of terms (الشَّكُورُ is the name of Allah, the One Who Recompenses His slaves for their actions with plentiful reward. It has also been said [that it means] "The One Who Praises the slaves").

Fifth: Our saying, "Praise belongs to Allah the Lord of the worlds", is better, according to the people who ascertain [statements], than "There is no god but Allah" for two reasons: ● one is that which an-Nasa'i narrated of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Whoever says, 'There is no god but Allah' then twenty virtues will be recorded for him, and whoever says, 'Praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds', has thirty virtues recorded for him"; ● the second is that the tawhid that "There is no god but Allah" requires is [already] present in your saying, "Lord of the worlds" and is increased [over and above that] with your saying, "Praise belongs to Allah" and there [also] are the meanings in it which we have already presented. As for the saying of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "The best that I have said, I

---

[1] Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Adham. He was at one point the Prince of the region of Balkh in central Asia, but he turned to Allah and abandoned everything he possessed. Imam al-Junayd said of him, "Ibrahim is the key to the sciences" and he is held in great respect, by all who have knowledge, for his exemplary life and his incisive wisdom with respect to the states of man. He associated with Sufyan ath-Thauri.

[2] الْحَقُّ One of the names of Allah.

and the prophets before me, is 'There is no god but Allah',"[1] then that is only because of the tawhid which it contains, and "Praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds" participates along with it in that [meaning] and has increase beyond that. The believer says it seeking reward, but as for the one who enters Islam then he is required to say, "There is no god but Allah."

Sixth: الرَّبُّ (the Lord) has as its measure فَعِلٌ with a kasrah on the ᶜayn (the middle letter so then it would be الرَّبِبُ) but then it (the kasrah) was assimilated. Its meanings are four: ● the God (i.e. the One worshipped); ● the Lord; ● the Owner; ● and the One Who puts right. All of these meanings are in "The Lord of the worlds" but the meaning of "the God" is the most correct because of its being particularly for Allah, exalted is He.

Similarly the most correct meaning of الْعَالَمِينَ (the worlds) is that every existent [thing] apart from Allah, exalted is He, is meant by it so that it is in general, all created beings.

Also in the dictionary of terms, Ibn Juzayy said:

> الْعَالَمِينَ is the plural of عَالَم which according to the scholars of kalam (theology) is every existent thing apart from Allah. It has also been said that الْعَالَمِينَ are humans, jinn and the angels, for its plural is the plural of those possessing intellect. It has also been said "Humans in particular", because of His words, "Do you approach the males of الْعَالَمِينَ?"2

الْعَالَمِينَ 'of the worlds'. الْعَالَمِينَ presents us with a thoughtful matter. عَالَم is a 'world' and as such a neutral concept. One of its plurals is عَوَالِم, a broken plural and this has a sense of non-intelligent and inanimate beings. The endings وُنَ and يِنَ represent sound plurals and are only used for numbers of beings with intelligence, i.e. humans, angels or jinn.

Seventh: مَلِك (King) is the recitation of the community (jamaᶜah) and is without the alif and it is [derived] from الْمُلْك (the kingdom). ᶜAsim and al-Kisa'i recited it with the alif (i.e. مَالِك – an Owner[3]) whereby it has to be understood in the following manner "Owner of the coming of the Day of Accounting" or "Owner of the affair on the Day of Accounting". The recitation of the community (King – مَلِكٌ), [however] has more weight from three aspects: ● first, that the King is greater than the Owner since anyone can be described as an owner of his wealth and property, but

---

[1] Related in the *Jamiᶜ* of at-Tirmidhi, Kitab ad-Daᶜawat.

[2] Surah ash-Shuᶜara, ayah 165. These are the words of Lut, peace be upon him, addressed to his people in which he condemns the lust of males for other males instead of their wives.

[3] Derived from مِلْكٌ – possession.

as for the King he is the Lord of men; ● the second, His statement, "And His is the kingdom upon the day in which it will be blown into the trumpet"1; ● third, that it (King) does not require an understood but missing phrase while the other (Owner) does require it, since it has to be understood as "Owner *of the affair*" or "Owner *of the coming* of the day of accounting", and the ellipsis is contrary to the original[2].

As for the recitation of the community, the genitive relation of the 'King' to the 'Day of accounting' (i.e. "King of the Day of accounting") is such as to give it the widest sense possible. It treats the adverb [of time] (i.e. 'Day') in the same manner as the object, and the meaning of it as an adverb is "the King *on* the Day of Accounting", and it would be acceptable for it to mean "King *of the affairs* on the Day of Accounting", so that there would then be an ellipsis in it. The two recitations have been related of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. ملك has been recited in many different ways which are, however, irregular (شَاذٌ)[3].

Eighth: مَلِك الرَّحِيمِ الرَّحْمَنِ are adjectives [of the divine name in the first ayah]. So if it is said: "How can the word مَلِك be in the genitive case when it is an adjective of the definite noun [Allah] and the genitive construction of the active participle is not genuine?" Then the answer is that it will not be genuine if it is with the meaning of the present or the future, but as for this it is continuous, always, so its genitive construction is genuine[4].

---

[1] Surah al-An^c^am, ayah 73.

[2] i.e. there is no alif explicitly written in the ^c^Uthmani mushaf and so it is not strictly required in the recitation because it would then necessitate an ellipsis.

[3] Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabari notes the different readings of ملك and rejects them as they have rejected by the ijma^c^ of the community and the reciters. He sums up his discussion of the merits of both ملك and مالك by saying that the former is the soundest reading by the virtue of the excellence of sovereignty and kingship over possession as " it is not possible to have sovereignty and kingship without possession, whereas there can be ownership without sovereignty" so that the first reading includes both meanings. *Jami^c^ Bayan ^c^an Ta'wil al-Qur'an*, vol. 1.

[4] This specific grammatical construction of the Arabic where the active participle is both an adjective describing the definite noun (Allah) as well as being in the construct state (إِضَافَة) is usually not admissible. However, as the author says, since the participle Malik is not restricted by a specific time or tense, being in a sense a 'perpetual description' of Allah, the active participle (اسم فاعل in Arabic) can also take part in a genitive construct with "**the**

يَوْمِ 'of the day'

الدِّينِ – 'the reckoning'

Ninth: يَوْمِ الدِّينِ is the Day of Resurrection, and the following meanings of الدِّينِ are fitting here: ● the Reckoning, ● Recompense, ● and Subjection, and an example of it (the last meaning) is "Truly we are definitely overcome (or requited, taken to account)"1.

إِيَّاكَ

كَ is 'You' and إِيَّا is prefixed to it largely because كَ cannot stand alone like that.

نَعْبُدُ 'we worship/slave for'.

نَعْبُدُ is, of course, derived from عَبْدٌ – a slave. "You we slave for!"

Tenth: إِيَّاكَ in both places is an object of the verb which follows it, and it is only brought forward[2] in order to give the meaning of limitation (al-hasr), because the bringing of words, which are governed syntactically by other words, forward [in the syntactical structure of the sentence] requires limitation. The saying of the slave, "You we worship", requires that he worship Allah alone without any partner to Him, and his saying, "and You we seek aid from", requires an acknowledgement of incapacity and need and that we only seek aid from Allah alone.

وَإِيَّاكَ 'and You'

نَسْتَعِينُ 'we seek aid [from]' or 'we estimate as being one who gives aid'. This is the tenth form of the verb, which we can recognise with the سْتَ letters addition.

Eleventh: إِيّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ means that "we seek aid from You for worship and for all our affairs". In this there is a proof of the falsity of the sayings of both the Qadariyyah (extreme proponents of human free-will) and the Jabriyyah (equally extreme proponents of predestination), and that the truth is in between the two[3].

Day of Accounting".

[1] Surah as-Saffat, ayah 53.

[2] إِيَّاكَ is brought forward from the normal grammatical construction, which would be نَسْتَعِينُكَ. إِيَّا is a particle of restriction or limitation (حَرْف حَصْر) which is used to provide emphasis to the statement.

[3] In this du'a there is a position between the two extremes of total free-will and predestination, as the slave *acts* and asks the Lord for aid and guidance, knowing that the affair is the hands of the Creator and that Allah "**does what He wills**". The correct position between the two extremes of compulsion (Qadr) and free-will (iradah) was stated by Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, may Allah be pleased with him, when he said, "There is neither compulsion nor free-will, but

Yet, as with Qur'an in general, the ayat which follow point out to us what the meaning of this seeking aid is: "Guide us on the straight path".

اهْدِ 'guide' from the root هَدَى

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> الْهُدَى has two meanings: [firstly] directing to the right way and [secondly] making clear. As for making clear, "Then as for Thamud, then We guided them"1 i.e. made clear to them. Directing to the right way, may be [in the sense of] ● to the pathway, ● to the deen, ● and the meaning of granting success, ● and inspiration.

نَا 'us'

> Twelfth: اهْدِنَا is a prayer for guidance. If it is said, "How can believers seek guidance when they already have it?" Then the answer is that "It is seeking constancy in it until death, or increase in it, because ascending through the stations has no end".
>
> Thirteenth: He made praise precede supplication because that is the sunnah in supplication, and the proper business in seeking is that it should come after praise, because that is more likely to gain a response. Similarly He made the name "the All- Merciful" precede "the King of the Day of Reckoning" because the mercy of Allah precedes His anger[2]. Similarly He made "You alone we worship" to precede "and You alone we seek aid from" because it makes the means [of gaining the favour] precede the object of need.
>
> Fourteenth: Allah is mentioned in the beginning of this surah in the mode of absence (i.e. as 'He')

---

rather something between the two". These are not concepts that can be limited by the extent of one's own intellect, but rather are realities that are experienced in the human situations individuals face day by day. To allow the intellect to judge in such matters is to ask the unattainable, and many of the scholars of the past have frowned upon delving deep into such matters, not because of what they are in themselves, but because they serve no practical purpose. Imam Malik, may Allah show mercy to him, said, "Discussion concerning religious matters I abhor; and the inhabitants of our town (meaning Madinah) have not ceased to hate it. I do not approve of discussion except with regards to that which serves a specific practical purpose. As for [futile] discussion concerning religious matters and Allah, silence is preferable to me; as I have seen the people of our town prohibiting discussion of religious matters except for that which serves a practical purpose." *Kitab Tahrim al-Kalam* by Ibn Qudamah, edited by G. Makdisi.

[1] Surah Fussilat, ayah 17.

[2] As Allah says in a hadith qudsi, "My mercy has outstripped My anger." Narrated by Ibn Majah. It has also been related in various forms by al-Bukhari, an-Nasa'i, Muslim and at-Tirmidhi.

and then in the mode of address (i.e. as 'You') in "You we worship…" and what comes after that, and that is named a sudden transition, and in that there is an indication that the slave, when he remembers Allah, draws closer to Him and becomes one of the people of the Presence so that he calls to Him[1].

الصِّرَاطَ 'the path'. It appears to have no verbal root[2].

Fifteenth: الصِّرَاطَ in language is the pathway perceptible to the senses which is walked upon, and it was later employed for the path which man is upon of [either] good or evil. The meaning of الْمُسْتَقِيمَ is the straight which has no zigzags in it. الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ is Islam, and it has been said that it is the Qur'an, and both meanings are close together since the Qur'an includes the laws of Islam, and both of them are narrated of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. الصِّرَاطَ has been recited with both ص and س and also in [a sound] between ص and ز, and it is said that it was purely recited with ز, and the original was with the س , but they only changed it for a ص to agree and harmonise with the ط in superiority and closedness. As for the ز it is employed in order to harmonise with the ط in openness[3].

الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 'the straight' and which is translated even by the Arabs as straight, i.e. that which has no crookedness or zig-zags in it. It is a very interesting word indeed.

الْمُسْتَقِيمَ is derived from a root قَامَ which means 'he stood'. It has a vertical rather than a horizontal

---

[1] This is the indication shown in two hadith qudsi, that Abu Hurairah reported the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, as saying that Allah, exalted is He, says, "I am with My slave when he remembers Me and his lips move with My name," related by Ibn Majah and al-Bukhari and "I am in My slave's opinion of Me and am with him when he calls to Me," and it is in the *Jami*ᶜ of at-Tirmidhi.

[2] Verbal roots – Arabic words in the dictionaries generally go back to actions, for example, he laughed, he thought, he did, etc. Allah's statement is that "He taught Adam the *names*, all of them" (nouns not verbs). We only have to look at a highly significant set of name-words, which are called in Arabic مَصْدَرٌ, pl. مَصَادِرُ, which are what we would know as verbal-nouns or nouns of actions, i.e. they are names of actions such as 'doing', 'writing' and 'laughing'. In reality a vast number of ordinary nouns or name words such as كِتَاب – a book and بَيْت – a house, can be seen as coming from verbal nouns, respectively كِتَابًا and بَيْتًا , so that they could be rendered as كِتَاب – a writing, or even, a writing to someone (as a verbal noun of the third form of the verb, i.e. كَاتَبَ), and بَيْت – a spending of the night.

[3] Openness and closedness here refer to the manner of pronunciation.

meaning. اسْتَقَامَ which is the tenth form derived from that root, by the kind of logic which Arabic works by, gives the sense of 'he sought to stand'[1]. The مُ generally signifies 'one who' or 'one which'. By this route we arrive at 'the one which seeks to stand'. Slightly more elegantly some people have expressed this hint by the English words 'upright' or 'upstanding'.

Nevertheless, without any doubt, الْمُسْتَقِيمَ means straight. The straight path is the clear shariᶜah of Islam and of all the prophets. Yet Allah does not leave us wondering about what this path might be, for He now describes three paths, one of which is the straight path and two of which claim also to be straight paths but are most definitely not. If you don't understand an ayah then look to the next one to see if it has some clarification.

صِرَاطَ الذِينَ "The path of the ones whom…"

أَنْعَمْتَ 'You have blessed,' being the fourth form of نَعِمَ 'he was joyful'. Bless and bliss are related in English just as أَنْعَمَ 'he blessed' and نَعِيمٌ 'bliss' are in Arabic.

عَلَيْهِمْ 'upon them'.

> Sixteenth: الذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ Ibn 'Abbas said: "They are the prophets, the sincerely truthful ones (صِدِّيقِين), the witnesses (شُهَدَاء) and the right-acting ones (صَالِحِينَ)." It has been said that they are the believers, and it has been said that they are the Companions, and its has been said they are the People of Musa and ᶜIsa before they altered [their deen], but the former is the more weighty because of its universality, and also because of His saying:

مَعَ الذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ

"…with the ones whom Allah has blessed of the prophets, the sincerely truthful ones, the witnesses and the right-acting ones…"[2]

So we have an outer and an inner description of the people on whose path we want to be guided. But how about those whose path claims to be the right one and which we must avoid? Allah says, "… [the path] of other than those on whom is wrath and not of those astray".

غَيْرِ 'other than'

الْمَغْضُوبِ 'the angered'.

Here we have no choice but to follow the route of sarf to the decoding of this word and the phrase that it is in.

غَضِبَ 'he was angry' and غَاضِبٌ 'an angry one' so that مَغْضُوبٌ is 'an object of anger' i.e. it is a مَفْعُولٌ or passive participle.

عَلَيْهِمْ 'upon them'

---

[1] The tenth verbal form in Arabic denotes to ask or to desire something, or to think of something as such and such.

[2] Surah an-Nisa, ayah 69.

So that الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ are the ‘angered upon them’, the recipients of anger, the objects of anger.

وَ ‘and’

لاَ ‘not’

الضَّالِّينَ ‘the strayers’.

“And not [the path of] the strayers”.

Seventeenth: the inflection of غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ is that it is an appositional substantive standing in for a substantive clause[1], and it is unlikely that it is a qualification because its genitive construction is not special and it stems from a definite noun. When it is read with the nasb (i.e. غَيْرَ which indicates the accusative) it denotes exception (i.e. “rather than the …”) or the present tense.

Eighteenth: the ascription of the blessing “upon them” is [made directly] to Allah (i.e. “…the ones You blessed”) whereas the doer of the anger is not mentioned out of tactfulness and courtesy, as in His saying, “And when I become ill, He heals me.”2 The first عَلَيْهِمْ is in the accusative position and the second in the nominative position.

Nineteenth: الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ (the ones with anger upon them) are the Jews and الضَّالِّينَ (those astray) are the Christians; Ibn ᶜAbbas, Ibn Masᶜud and others said that, and it has been narrated from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace[3]. It has been said that it is universal with respect to everyone who has anger upon them and every one astray, but the first statement is more weighty for four reasons: ● its narration from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and because of the majesty of the one who said it; ● the mention of “…and not…” in His words “…and not those astray” is an indication of the different natures of the two parties; ●

---

[1] That is to say it stands in for “**the ones You have blessed**” i.e. “the ones You have blessed [who are] not those on whom is the anger.”

[2] Surah ash-Shuᶜara, ayah 80. These are the words of Sayyiduna Ibrahim, peace be upon him. Ibn Juzayy says by way of tafsir on this ayah, “He attributed the illness to himself and the cure to Allah out of courtesy to Him” meaning that he did not say, “When Allah makes me ill, He heals me.” This stems from a deep and natural understanding of tawhid. When Allah mentions His blessings He includes Himself in it directly saying, “**The ones *You* have blessed**” and when speaking about His wrath He, exalted is He, does not say, “and not the ones *You* are angry with” but rather “**the ones on whom is the anger**” leaving direct mention of Himself out of it.

[3] By Ahmad in his *Musnad* and at-Tirmidhi.

"anger" is a description of the Jews in many places in the Qur'an, such as His words, "… and so they returned with anger from Allah"[1]; ● astrayness is a description of the Christians because of the disagreement of their sayings about ʿIsa ibn Maryam, peace be upon him, and because of the words of Allah about them, "…they strayed before and led many astray and strayed from the right path"[2].

Twentieth: this surah gathers together all the meanings of the Tremendous Qur'an and it is as if it were a summary copy of it, so consider it – after studying the sixth chapter of the first introduction – and you will realise that with respect to ● knowledge of the Divine, that occurs in His words, "The praise belongs to Allah the Lord of the worlds, the Merciful the Compassionate"; ● and the abode of the hereafter in His words, "King of the day of reckoning"; ● and all acts of worship, both in terms of beliefs and the judgements required by the commands and the prohibitions in His words, "You we worship"; ● and all of the shariʿah in His words, "The straight path"; ● and the Prophets and others in His words, "The ones You have blessed"; ● and mention of the groups of the kuffar in His words, "not the ones upon whom is anger nor those astray."

Conclusion: It is commanded to pronounce aameen at the conclusion of the Fatihah by way of a supplication for what is in it. Your saying "aameen" is a verbal noun whose meaning is "O Allah answer!". It has [also] been said that it is one of the names of Allah. It is permitted to extend the hamzah (i.e. آمِين) or to shorten it (أَمِين) but it is not permitted to double the meem (i.e. either آمِّين, or أَمِّين). In the salah let the one who follows the imam, the one who prays by himself and the imam pronounce the aameen in the prayers said silently. There is a disagreement about the prayers said aloud[3].

"Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, the All-Merciful, the Compassionate, King of the Day of Reckoning.

You alone we serve and You alone we seek aid from.

Guide us on the straight path, the path of the ones You have blessed not [the path of] those upon whom is

---

[1] Surah al-Baqarah, ayah 90.

[2] Surah al-Ma'idah, ayah 77.

[3] Malik, taking his proof from the ʿAmal Ahl al-Madinah, states that the ameen is said to oneself in prayers said both out loud and silently. Ash-Shafiʿi notes in his *Kitab al-Umm* that the people following the Imam do not say the ameen out loud whereas the Imam does. Abu Hanifah's position is similar to that of Malik on this point.

anger nor [of] those astray."

سورة البقرة– The Cow

ألم there are different views about them and about all the rest of the letters of the alphabet of the beginning letters of the surahs, which are

ألمص ألر ألمر كهيعص طه طسم طس يس ص حم حمعسق ن

One [group of] people said, "They cannot be explained because they are of the mutashabihat (ambivalent ayat) whose interpretation no-one knows but Allah." Abu Bakr as-Siddiq said, "Allah has in every Book a secret, and His secret in the Qur'an is the openings of the surahs."[1]

Another [group of] people said, "They can be explained," after which they differed. Some said, ● "They are the names of the surahs," and ● "They are names of Allah," and ● "They are things by which Allah swears an oath," and ● "They are letters cut off from words, so that the alif is from 'Allah' and the the lam from 'Jibril' and the mim from 'Muhammad', may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and likewise with all the rest of them." ● It is narrated in a hadith that the Children of Isra'il understood that the letters of the abjad (alphabet) indicate the years that this ummah will last. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, heard that from them and did not repudiate it. Abu'l-Qasim as-Suhayli counted up their number according to that, after leaving out repetitions, and they added up to nine hundred and three.

The grammatical analysis of these letters differs according to the difference in their meanings. It can be pictured that they are in the nominative, accusative or genitive cases[2]. The nominative case would be on the basis that they are subjects [of nominal sentences] or predicates of implied subjects. The accusative case [would be understood on the basis] that they are the objects of implied verbs. The genitive case is according to the word of those who consider them to be sworn by as you say, "[By] Allah, I will do!" (The divine name is in the genitive case.)

ذَالِكَ 'that' and here this word which is masculine and its feminine تِلْكَ 'that', also indicates the gender of the one addressed, that it is a singular masculine being. If it had been a woman addressed it would have to have

[1] This view is also reported to be that of the other three Khulafa' ar-Rashidun and of Ibn Mas[c]ud, may Allah be pleased with them, as was stated by Abu Layth as-Samarqandi in his tafsir.

[2] The grammatical analysis is given on the basis that tafsir on these letters is possible, and so their grammatical status depends on the interpretation given to them.

been ذٰلكَ, a group of men and women, or a group exclusively of men, would have been addressed with ذٰلكُمْ and a group composed exclusively of women would have been spoken to with ذٰلكُنَّ etc. Yet all of these can only be translated as 'that' in English. It is not a 'difficulty' of Arabic grammar but its clarity, its very Arabicness.

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ [the Book] here is the Qur'an. It has also been said, "The Tawrah and the Injil," and it has been said, "The Preserved Tablet" (اللَّوْحُ الْمَحْفُوظُ). The correct [position] is that which the following parts of the speech indicate and which many places in the Qur'an bear witness to. The purpose by it is to establish that the Qur'an is from Allah, as in His words, "The revelation of the Book no doubt in it is from the Lord of the worlds"1, meaning the Qur'an, about which there is [total] agreement. The predicate of "That" is "No doubt in it" (i.e. "That book, [there is] no doubt in it.") It has also been said, "Its predicate is 'The Book'", (i.e. "That is the Book") so on the basis of that it is an independent sentence and there must be a pause after it.

الْكِتَابُ 'the Book'. It is derived from a verbal noun of both the first form verb كَتَبَ 'he wrote' and of the third form كَاتَبَ 'he wrote to'. So 'book' really means a writing or a writing to someone, i.e. a letter. The word also means a decree.

"That is the Book". Jalal ad-Deen al-Mahalli[2] says in his commentary in the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* that ذٰلِكَ means هٰذَا 'this' so that he takes it to mean "this is the Book" i.e. "this Qur'an is the Book"

لاَ 'no'

رَيْبَ'doubt'.

فِيهِ 'in it'

"No doubt in it" meaning "There is no doubt that it is from Allah [and] in the same matter, in the belief of the people of truth," and as for the people of falsehood, [their doubts] were not taken account of. The predicate of "no doubt" is "in it" (i.e. "no doubt is in it") so that there is a pause after that [in the recitation]. It has been said, "Its predicate is implied, so that one pauses after 'No doubt'," but the first position is more weighty because of its being specified in His words "no doubt" in other places.

If it is said, "Why did He not make His words 'In it' precede 'doubt' as in His words 'There is not

[1] Surah as-Sajdah, ayah 2.

[2] The teacher of Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti in the sciences of tafsir who started to write his own tafsir but died without completing it, whereupon his student undertook to complete it. The *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* (The Commentary of the Two Jalals) is universally recognised as the best for beginning the study of tafsir.

> in it headache'[1]? Then the answer is that He intended to negate [the possibility of] any doubt in it. If He had made "in it" precede, it would then have indicated that there is another Book in which there is a doubt, just as "there is not in it headache" indicates that the wine of this world has headache in it, whereas this meaning would have made His purpose remote, so the predicate is not made to precede [the subject].

هُدًى 'guidance'. We have asked for guidance in the Fatihah and immediately the Qur'an begins with it, but it has conditions.

> "A guidance" here with the meaning "making to take the right way" (إِرْشَادٌ) because of its specially singling out the people of taqwa. If it had [just] been with the meaning of "explaining" it would have been general as in His words "a guidance for mankind"2. Its grammatical analysis is that it is the predicate of a subject (i.e. "the book is a guidance") or it is a subject whose predicate is "in it" (i.e. "in it is guidance"), according to whoever pauses after "no doubt", or it is accusative denotative of state (i.e. "as a guidance") and the agent in it is the indication.

لِ is 'for' or 'belonging to',

"Guidance for the مُتَّقِينَ"

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> تَقْوَى is a verbal noun which derives from الْوِقَايَةُ (preserving, guarding), and the ت is in exchange for the و. Its meaning is fear, clinging to obedience to Allah and abandoning disobedience to Him. It is the sum of all good.

And in his commentary:

> "For the muttaqeen (people of taqwa)" which is [based on the eighth verbal form] مُفْتَعِلِينَ from at-taqwa, whose meaning has been dealt with previously in the book.

مُتَّقِينَ This word derives from وَقَى 'he kept, preserved, defended' and it is from the eighth form which gives اتَّقَى , and that added ت in the verb can introduce the element of the self, it is what is called reflexive in the grammar, as if it meant 'he kept himself, he preserved himself, he defended himself' and مُتَّقٍ means 'one who kept himself, preserved himself, defended himself' مُتَّقِينَ is its plural.

The men of knowledge have various formulations as to what comprises تَقْوَى. It has degrees but in essence it involves all actions of keeping away from what is forbidden, frowned upon or merely valueless and performing those actions which are obligatory, recommended and praiseworthy. Ibn Juzayy continues:

> We will discuss taqwa in three sections.

---

[1] Surah as-Saffat, ayah 47, speaking about the wine of the hereafter.

[2] Surah Ali ʿImran, ayah 4 and Surah al-Anʿam, ayah 91.

First section:

Concerning its virtues derived from the Qur'an, and they are fifteen: ● guidance because of His words "guidance for the muttaqeen"; ● help because of His words "Truly, Allah is with the people who have taqwa"1; ● close friendship because of His words, "Allah is the close friend of the muttaqeen"2; ● love because of His words, "Truly Allah loves the muttaqeen"3; ● and covering over [of wrong actions] because of His words, "If you have taqwa of Allah He will make for you a discrimination and He will cover over for you your wrong actions"4; ● and a way out from unhappiness, and provision from where one does not expect because of His words, "Whoever has taqwa of Allah He will make a way out for him and provide him from where he does not expect"5; ● the facilitation of affairs because of His words, "Whoever has taqwa of Allah He will make ease for him in his affair"6; ● full covering over of wrong actions and magnification of rewards because of His words, "Whoever has taqwa of Allah He will cover over his wrong actions and magnify for him a reward7"; ● acceptance of actions because of His words, "Allah only accepts from the muttaqeen"8; ● success because of His words, "And have taqwa of Allah in order that you might succeed"9; ● good news because of His words "For them there is good news in this world and in the later"10; ● entrance into the Garden because of His words "Truly, there are for the muttaqeen with their Lord Gardens of bliss"11; ● and salvation from the Fire because of His words "Then We

[1] Surah an-Nahl, ayah 128.

[2] Surah Jathiyah, ayah 19.

[3] Surah at-Tawbah, ayat 4 & 7.

[4] Surah al-Anfal, ayah 29.

[5] Surah at-Talaq, ayah 2.

[6] Surah at-Talaq, ayah 4.

[7] Surah at-Talaq, ayah 5.

[8] Surah al-Ma'idah, ayah 27.

[9] Surah Ali ᶜImran, ayah 200.

[10] Surah Yunus, ayah 64.

[11] Surah al-Qalam, ayah 34.

will save the ones who had taqwa"1.

Second Section

There are ten things which awaken taqwa: ● fear of punishment in the next life; ● fear [of punishment in] this life; ● hope of worldly reward; ● hope of the reward of the next world; ● fear of the reckoning; ● shyness and bashfulness before the gaze of Allah, and this is the station of fearful watchfulness (مُرَاقَبَة); ● showing gratitude for His blessings by obeying Him; ● knowledge, because of His words, "They only fear Allah, of His slaves, the ones who have knowledge"[2]; ● exalting and honouring His majesty, and it is the station of awe (هَيْبَة); ● sincerity in love because of the words of the one who said:

"You disobey God while you make apparent that you love Him,
This, by my life, in analogy is a marvel.
If your love were sincere you would have obeyed Him,
Truly, the lover towards the one he loves is obedient."[3]

And to Allah be attributed the good of the one who said:

"She said, and she had asked about the state of her lover,
'For Allah's sake, describe him and do not omit and do not exceed!'
So I said, 'If he had feared death from thirst,
and you had said, "Stop! don't approach the water!" then he would not have approached.'"

The Third Section

There are five degrees of taqwa: ● that the slave should protect himself from kufr (covering over the truth), and that is the station of Islam; ● and that he should protect himself from acts of disobedience and forbidden things, and it is the station of turning or repentance (تَوْبَة); ● and that he should protects himself from doubtful matters, and that is the station of caution or carefulness (وَرَع); ● and that he should protect himself from even those things that are permitted, and that is the station of doing without (زُهْد); ● and that he should protect himself from the presence of other than Allah in his heart, and it is the presence of witnessing (مُشَاهَدَة).

Yet there is another way to the meaning of مُتَّقِين , this group for whom alone the Qur'an is guidance, for, as

[1] Surah Maryam, ayah 82.

[2] Surah Fatir, ayah 28.

[3] These are the words of the poet al-Mahmud ibn al-Hassan al-Warraq.

so often in Qur'an, if you don't understand, read on. They are:

الَّذِينَ 'the ones who …'.

يُؤْمِنُونَ 'they have إِيمَانٌ', 'they believe', 'they affirm'.

Allah is الْمُؤْمِنُ 'the One Who makes safe and secure' whereas if a human is a مُؤمِنٌ he is a believer.

أَمِنَ 'he was safe or secure or felt safe and secure'. Allah censures those who feel safe and secure. أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ فَلاَ يَأمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلاَّ الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ "So do they feel secure from the plot of Allah? And no-one feels secure from the plot of Allah except for folk in loss."[1] Yet when أ is placed in front of أَمِنَ making it into the fourth form of the verb we have a much more active, dynamic and praiseworthy sense from it. For أَمِنَ 'he felt safe' has a ring of complacency to it but ءَامَنَ has the dynamic and psychologically healthy senses of 'becoming true to the trust placed in one by Allah' and of 'affirmation'. The scholars of the shariʿah say that it means تَصْدِيقٌ 'affirmation' and the best of what I have heard about that is that it means belief in the heart and affirmation by the tongue.

بِالْغَيْبِ

بِ 'by' or 'in'

الْغَيْبِ 'the unseen'.

> "The ones who believe in the unseen" on which there are two sayings: ● that they believe in the matters which are concealed such as the next life, etc., and so the unseen here has the meaning of the غَائِبٌ meaning the "what is absent", which is either the making of a noun from a verbal noun, as for instance عَدْلٌ , or it is it is a lightening of the grammatical form فَعِيلٌ in the same way as مَيِّتٌ [2]. ● The other meaning is that they believe in the state of their absence (i.e. their absence from among other people), meaning both inwardly and outwardly.
>
> "In the unseen" according to the first statement is connected to "they believe" (i.e. "they believe *in* the unseen"), and according to the second statement it is in the position of being denotative of state (i.e. "they believe *while* unseen" or absent from others). It is acceptable for "the ones who" that it should be in the genitive condition as a description (i.e. "guidance for the muttaqeen *for* the ones who"), or in the accusative condition on the basis of an understood verb (e.g. "guiding those who believe in the unseen"), or nominative on the basis that it is the predicate of a subject (e.g. "they are the ones who").

"They believe in/affirm the unseen", which is the first interpretation of the ayah mentioned by Ibn Juzayy,

---

[1] Surah al-Ahzab, ayah 99.

[2] Which we would expect to be مَيِيت, thus the origin of the word غَيْب would be غَيِيب which has in turn been lightened to غَيْب.

i.e. in the realities of Allah, the Angels, the Messengers, the revealed Books, the Garden, the Fire, the Last Day, the Decree of good and evil and all of the other matters great and small which are unseen to our senses.

وَ 'and'

يُقِيمُونَ 'they are establishing' or 'they are making stand' a fourth form verb أَقَامَ from قَامَ 'he stood'.

Ibn Juzayy said in his dictionary of terms:

> أَقَامَ has three meanings: ● someone else made a man stand, which is from قِيَامٌ "standing"; ● and from التَّقْوِيمُ (erection) of which there is, "… a wall which was about to fall, so they erected it…"; ● and أَقَامَ in a place, i.e. he resided, of which there is مُقِيمٌ (resident) i.e. permanently.

الصَّلَوةَ 'the salah'.

> "And they establish the salah". As for the establishment of it (إِقَامَة) : its knowledge is from your saying, "The market was tended and watched over (قَامَتْ)" and the like of that, and it [means] complete guardianship over it, in its prescribed times, with sincerity (إِخْلَاص) to Allah in its performance, and fulfilling its preconditions, its fundamental pillars, its excellences (فَضَائِل), its sunnahs, and the presence of the heart in humility within it, clinging to the gathering (الْجَمَاعَة) for the obligatory prayers, and increasing in optional [prayers].

The Imamate or Khilafah

It is said that with the daily prayer there is manifested the need of an imam for the prayer, but that with the appearance of Ramadan Amirate is required to make the decision to fast based on the evidence being brought to the Amir of the moon-sighting. Even more, zakah requires the Khalifah to appoint assessors and collectors for the zakah and distributors. It is worthwhile here to look at the standard position of the Muslims on the Khilafah. Our source is still Ibn Juzayy, but another work of his, الْقَوَانِينُ الْفِقْهِيَّةُ – *The Fiqh Canons.* This work is particularly interesting to us because it encompasses the positions of the Imams of all the madhhabs while never abandoning a clear commitment to the school of the People of Madinah. He is careful to delineate in it those positions which are not agreed upon, and the divergences within the school of Madinah, and between the madhhabs. Therefore his silence as to any divergence of views on a particular matter is an indication that it is something he regards as being unanimously agreed upon by the Muslims, as the following matter of Khilafah, for example.

> Chapter 8 (of *al-Qawanin al-Fiqhiyyah* of Ibn Juzayy)
>
> On the Imamate, concerning which there are two issues:
>
> First issue: on affirmation of the Imamate of the Four Khulafa, may Allah be pleased with them.
>
> The proof of the Imamate of all of them has three aspects: first, each of them united the conditions of the Imamate completely; second, the Muslims who lived in the time of each one of them were

unanimous in pledging allegiance to him and in coming under obedience to him, and consensus is a proof; third, that companionship (with the Prophet) which each of them had, [their] emigration, majestic deeds, Allah's praise of them, and the Truthful One's, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, bearing witness of the Garden for them. Moreover the Messenger of Allah, صلي الله عليه و سلم, indicated the Khilafah of Abu Bakr and ᶜUmar, and he commanded that people model themselves on them. He put Abu Bakr in charge of the Farewell Hajj and made him lead the prayer in his final illness which is an indication of his being appointed Khalifah. Then Abu Bakr appointed ᶜUmar Khalifah, then ᶜUmar made the matter the business of consulation among six [people] and they agreed on putting ᶜUthman forward. He was wrongfully killed, for which there is the testimony of the Prophet , صلي الله عليه و سلم, and his promise to him of the Garden for that. Then the man with most right to it was ᶜAli because of his noble rank and his sublime virtues. As for that which happened between ᶜAli and Muᶜawiyyah and those Companions with each of them, then the most fitting thing is to withhold oneself from mentioning it, and that they should be remembered in the best way, and that one should seek the best interpretation for them, because it was a matter of ijtihad. As for ᶜAli and those with him, they were on the truth because they exercised ijtihad and were correct [in it] and so they will be rewarded. As for Muᶜawiyyah and those with him, they exercised ijtihad and were mistaken, and they are to be excused. It is required that one respect them and all of the Companions and love them because of the praise of them that occurs in Qur'an and because of their accompanying the Messenger of Allah, صلي الله عليه و سلم. He, صلي الله عليه و سلم, said, "Allah! Allah! concerning my companions. Do not make them a target after me. Whoever loves them, then it is for love of me he loves them. Whoever hates them, it is because of hatred of me that he hates them. Whoever harms them has harmed me, and whoever harms me has harmed Allah."[1]

---

[1] The history of all of the above is in the hadith literature, and has been ably summarised by Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti in his *Tarikh al-Khulafa*, the chapters on the Khulafa ar-Rashidun being translated into English and published as *The Khalifahs Who Took the Right Way*, Ta-Ha Publishers Ltd., London 1995.

More important than that book but assuming a knowledge of its material is the work of the Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-ᶜArabi *al-Qawasim min al-ᶜAwasim* which is translated into English and published under the title *The Defence Against Disaster* by Madinah Press. His is a most delicate examination of the troubles that occurred in the time of the

The Second Issue: the pre-conditions of the Imamate are eight: Islam, maturity (puberty), intellect (i.e. sanity), maleness, justice, knowledge, competence, and that his descent should be from Quraysh, but on this [last] there is a difference of opinion. So that if people agree [on pledging allegiance] to one who does not meet all of the conditions then it is permitted, from fear of causing dissension and sedition.

It is not permitted to rise up against people in authority even if they are tyrannical, unless they openly display clear disbelief. It is obligatory to obey them in [both] whatever a man loves and [whatever] he dislikes, unless they order disobedience [to Allah] for there is no obedience due to a creature if it involves disobedience to the Creator.

وَمِمَّا 'and from what'
رَزَقْنَا 'We provide'
هُمْ 'them'
يُنْفِقُونَ 'they spend'.

"And from that which We provide them they spend" concerning which there are three sayings: ● [firstly, that it is] zakah, because of its being paired with salah; ● secondly, that it is voluntary [giving of sadaqah]; ● thirdly, that it is general (i.e. any kind of spending) and this is the most weighty since there is no proof of singling out [one particular form of spending].

"Alif Lam Meem.
That is the book no doubt.
In it there is guidance for the people of taqwa,
the ones who affirm the unseen, establish the salah
and from that which We provide them they spend."

It is possible that the ayat which follow continue the description of the people of taqwa and it is also possible that it is an entirely other group and an entirely other statement about them.

"And the ones who believe". They are the same ones who were mentioned before ("…the ones who believe in the unseen…") so that [the conjunction "and"] would be a conjunction of description. Or it is others, i.e. those of the People of the Book who surrendered (in Islam) so that [the "and"] would be a conjunction of contrast. Or it is a subject whose predicate is the clause which comes

---

Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, exonerating them from any guilt, and a refutation of the slanders that have infiltrated the Muslim community from modernist and shi^cah sources.

after (i.e. "And the ones who … those they are on a guidance from their Lord…").

وَالذِينَ 'And the ones who'.

يُومِنُونَ 'they believe/affirm'.

بِ 'in' i.e. 'they believe in/affirm'

مَا 'what'

أُنْزِلَ 'was sent down'. It is the passive of the fourth form أَنْزَلَ 'He sent down' from the first form نَزَلَ 'it came down'. The verb is employed for a number of purposes in Qur'an for the descent of the revelation, for the descent of the rain and for the revelation of iron[1]. It becomes clear from a careful reading of the text that the descent of the rain, after the plain literal meaning, is often also a metaphor for the descent of the revelation. Likewise the action of the rain in bringing dead earth to life with plant growth is used as a metaphor for the action of the revelation in bringing dead hearts (the earth) to life, and also for the resurrection of the dead in the Next Life.

Furthermore Allah uses two forms of this root to describe His action in sending down. First He uses أَنْزَلَ 'He sent down' to indicate the sending down all-in-one-go as was the way with the revelations of previous prophets. Secondly He uses نَزَّلَ 'He sent down' in the sense of 'He sent down repeatedly time after time over some period', as was the case with the revelation of Qur'an which took place over twenty-three years.

إِلَيْكَ 'to you' singular

"In that which was revealed to you" the Qur'an.

وَمَا 'and what'

أُنْزِلَ 'was sent down'

مِن قَبْلِ 'from before' literally i.e. 'before'

كَ 'you'

"And that which was revealed before you" the Tawrah, the Injil and others of Allah the Mighty and Majestic's [revealed] Books.

وَ 'and'

بِ 'in'

الآخِرَة 'the later' i.e. the next-life

بِالآخِرَة 'in the akhirah'

هُمْ 'they'

يُوقِنُونَ 'are certain'

"they are certain of the next life"

أُولَئِكَ 'those'

---

[1] Allah says in Surah al-Hadid, ayah 25, "**And We revealed iron in which there is great power and benefit for mankind.**"

عَلَى ‘upon’ i.e. ‘are upon’
هُدًى ‘guidance’
مِن ‘from’
رَبِّهِمْ ‘their Lord’.
وَأُولَئِكَ ‘And those’
هُمْ ‘they [are]’
الْمُفْلِحُونَ ‘the successful’
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ‘they are the successful’.

“Alif Lam Meem.
That is the book no doubt.
In it there is guidance for the people of taqwa,
the ones who affirm the unseen, establish the salah a
nd from that which We provide them they spend.
And the ones who believe in (affirm) what was sent down to you
and what was sent down before you and of the next life they are certain,
those are upon a guidance from their Lord.
And those they are the successful.”